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ABSTRACT

Focusing on issues of access to and participation in community media, this report reviews progress so far and analyzes the difficulties that underlie the transfer and adaptation of community communications media in developing countries. The first chapter contains introductory material on the subject of community media and development and describes a participative model for using media in community development situations. The second chapter discusses the practice of community communications by defining objectives, presenting background information on present projects, and describing criteria for selecting community media. The third chapter examines three community development communications projects in detail to show the development of methods that suit particular tasks and the choice of media that suit particular conditions, and the fourth chapter offers an appropriate methodology for using media in community development, with implications for future projects. (RL)

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Community Communications

the role of community media in development

by Frances J. Berrigan
May 1979

Reports and Papers on Mass Communication No. 90

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Preface

In recent years, Unesco has been associated with a number of studies, projects and seminars in the field of community media, focusing upon issues of access and participation. A study of North American and European models was published in 1977, and in October 1978, a meeting of experts was organized in Belgrade to discuss the theme of "Self-Management, Access and Participation in Communication". A main objective of this meeting was to relate the potential of community media formats originally developed in the industrialized world to developing country environments, and the recommendations put forward were taken up in several regional seminars and consultations, held in Latin America (organized by CIESPAL in Quito, October, 1978) and in Malaysia, (organized by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development, December 1978).

This study reviews progress so far and analyzes the difficulties which underly the transfer and adaptation of community communications. It has deliberately been written at a time when we have seen some tentative experiences in this new field, are in the process of evaluating some more, and are beginning to consider the most opportune thrust for our next efforts.

Its author, Frances BERRIGAN, is widely experienced in the field; she edited the original study of community media in North America and Europe, "Access: Some Western Models of Community Media" and directed the Kuala Lumpur consultation. In preparing this work, she has had free access to Unesco files and has met with many of the project leaders and organizers of whom she makes mention. Her study is intended as a piece of timely stocktaking.

As such, the opinions are personal, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Unesco.

Notes on the Author

Frances BERRIGAN is at present a researcher with the Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University, United Kingdom, specializing in the evaluation of broadcast programming within the University's teaching programme. She has also been an editor and producer of educational programmes for the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the British Broadcasting Corporation, a free-lance radio, television and newspaper journalist, and a research fellow with the Film and Television Department at Middlesex Polytechnic, United Kingdom.

In her work for Unesco, she is the author of a manual on mass media in population and development, as well as a study of community media in North America and Europe, and has conducted broadcasting training courses and workshops in Africa and Asia.

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Chapter I

Community Communications in Development

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is written in the belief that development is desirable and that communications media can contribute towards development. The danger in setting out to suggest the ways in which communications media might do this is that the role media can play is over-emphasized, and claims a priority of importance. This is not the intention here, for although the author does consider communications media of considerable value in development, they can never be effective alone, without practical changes in each particular country's social, polical and organizational structure. The value of communications media is in support of a whole range of development initiatives. There is little media can do in isolation.

But the part that the media can play in development is obvious. Developing communities are characterized by isolation from ideas and information as well as services. Most people live in rural areas where transport of people and commodities is slow and difficult, cutting off access to markets, to social and cultural centres. The pattern of development often means that essential services and improvements, such as education and health services, reach the towns first. It takes a long time for these to be extended to the countryside, where the bulk of the population lives. The limited number of education and training centres in the cities cannot cope with the numbers who need to be trained, and extension workers find it hard to cover the areas where they are most needed. Yet, without an influx of specialist help and information to rural areas, development will be slow. A danger facing many countries is the drift to the cities by the young, attracted by urban facilities. The only way to prevent this is through rural development. Communications media can be the cheapest and swiftest method of reaching rural communities, and of providing some expertise where none has existed.

Because communications media can reach isolated communities, emphasis has been on the use of mass communications: messages flowing from capital cities to the periphery. In most cases, feedback from the communities was limited. Communications media communicated one-way, from the centre outwards. What happened to the message, its impact and the attitude of those on the receiving end, were not taken into account. The content of programming was decided centrally, based on the opinions of a relatively small group of people as to what rural communities needed and wanted to know. In the use of media for development, emphasis has been on telling and teaching, rather than an exchange of requests and ideas between the centre and outlying areas.

In the chapters which follow, examples will be given to describe relatively new uses of media for development purposes. These uses still acknowledge the part media can play in substituting for face-to-face, person-to-person communication, and in reaching more than one individual at a time. They sometimes illustrate communications on a large scale, nationally and regionally, but also group to group and region to region. More importantly, they are uses of communications media which not only enable two-way communication, dialogue, from periphery to centre and vice versa, and between groups, but which are based upon this dialogue.

2. COMMUNITY MEDIA

Uses of communications media which include two-way communication have been called 'community communications' or 'community media'. In the past, similar terms have been used to identify programming especially designed for particular community groups, such as ethnic or minority groups, groups with special needs or interests. Other than this deliberate orientation, little in the production procedure was changed. Topics were chosen in the same way, by professional communicators, and targeted towards the apparent needs and interests of the audience. But community

communications should mean more than programming designed for special or selected groups. They are intended to be based on more than assumed audience needs and interests. Community media are adaptations of media for use by the community, for whatever purposes the community decides. They are media to which members of the community have access, for information, education, entertainment, when they want access. They are media in which the community participates, as planners, producers, performers. They are the means of expression of the community, rather than for the community. Community communications describe an exchange of views and news, not a transmission from one source to another.

The relevance of community media for development depends upon an understanding of what development is. There is a close parallel between recent thinking about communications, and the process of development itself. Both arise from socio-political concerns.

3. ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

(i) Socio-Political Origins

In the previous section, reference was made to access to communications media, and participation in media programming. These two terms have gained popularity in the industrialized world in discussions of media use, and have resulted practically in a crop of citizen 'access' programming on national broadcast networks, the setting up of communication centres for non-professional use, and some democratization of major broadcasting institutions to allow for greater citizen participation.(1) Alongside these changes, projects based on the access/participation principle have been tried in developing countries. But access and participation have a wide implication, beyond reform of media organizations, and media production techniques. They are concepts rooted in socio-political theory. The demand for access and participation applies primarily to the political sphere, and it is a demand for access to and participation in the political cycle.

Present day democracies operate at a remove from the community. We elect representatives once every three to five years, and during that time, the voice of the individual or group has little influence on government decision-making. Although most countries do provide routes of direct access to elected members, the procedure is cumbersome and difficult to pursue. Each parliamentarian speaks for thousands, and his main task is to work within the political manifesto agreed by his party beforehand, and upon which he was elected. So, for the term of office of each government, participation in government by citizens is virtually non-existent. This is a far cry from the archetypal model of democracy developed by the Athenians. Government was carried out through open debate in which any responsible person could speak and the extent to which he was listened to depended mainly on his oratorical ability to persuade others. Despite the shortcomings of the system, this direct approach allowed access and participation to the decision-making cycle itself.

Government today is carried out by representatives, through a process of delegation. We have evolved systems which, for convenience, are representative democracies. And, because of the political party system, our choice on election day is limited to a choice between several different 'packages' of government. Part of the reason for evolution along these lines lies in belief about the 'good of the realm' or the state versus the good of the individual. We have mortgaged some individual freedoms for the well-being of the state as a whole, the extent to which this has been done varying between countries. And it is the continuing debate about the 'good of the state' versus the freedom of the individual which has led to current interest in the notions of access and participation.

A question which has preoccupied sociologists, political theorists and educationalists is how far, and on which issues, we need to delegate, and how far it is possible to return to a more direct, 'participatory' pattern of decision-making. This is backed by a belief that representative government is too removed and too all-encompassing, so that the freedom and the right of the community have been eroded. It is a belief that not only is the community capable of managing more of its own affairs, but that it is desirable and right that more power should be returned to the people. What is envisaged is a horizontally-layered process of government, with community sectors returning mandates to the elected governors. It is a reversal of the 'top down' or vertical system of government now adopted by most nations.

There is no universal agreement as to how extensive citizen participation should be. Between nations there is a difficulty over the rights of the individual vis-à-vis the role of the state, and this causes problems of interpretation of 'Human Rights' definitions.

The situation in less developed countries has some parallels with the difference between Eastern and Western ideologies. While some industrialized nations have made an apparent commitment to individual freedom and self-fulfilment, this may be more difficult in a developing country context. The concern with national development may outweigh interest in promoting self-fulfilment and/or individualism, necessitating a greater emphasis upon centralized decision-making and national expansion. Access and participation, as socio-political concepts, have different implications according to the ideological setting.

(ii) Communications Access and Participation

Even though day-to-day participation in decision-making may be the ideal, the practicalities of setting up such a system are overwhelming. Champions of socio-political access and participation do not advocate a return to the Forum. Rather, the feasibility of introducing some method of horizontal participation has occupied most attention. There are some national and regional issues in which the community voice should be heard, as well as local and neighbourhood ones. How can the decisions of the majority be conveyed? Where is the discussion chamber large enough to allow for an exchange of information and ideas, before the decision is reached? How can reactions to plans and projects be gauged? How can the community be organized to focus upon areas in which decisions need to be taken, and to throw up ideas for the solution of problems?

The application of access and participation invariably involves communications. It is argued that communications media are the vehicles through which practical participatory democracy might be applied. At the simplest level, before people can consider a question, they need to be fully aware of all the facts: the short-term effects and the long-term implications, ways in which decisions taken in one area will affect future planning. Communications media could present this information. At the same time, if people have access to communications media, they can use them to request furthur information, and convey their views to others. The media, when placed in the hands of the community might become the machinery through which participation in the socio-political sphere is achieved.

The idea of community communications (the term embodies the notions of access and participation through media) is a reflection of these concerns about the part the individual might play in shaping his own socio-political, cultural and economic environment. Centralization was intended to free us from certain responsibilities, such as the onus of keeping law and order, of providing water, sanitation, transport and education, and institutions were set up to carry out these tasks collectively. But the extent of centralization has to be controlled. Where all areas of decision are removed, the individual becomes powerless and passive.

In any society, change is occurring all the time. New needs arise as others are satisfied. Institutions which were set up to manage certain areas of activity can become outmoded. One example is in the field of the arts. There are many institutions in the industrialized countries which have the responsibility to service the cultural and artistic needs of the community. But most of these are oriented towards classical ideas of 'culture': ballet, opera, music of the great European masters, classical drama. For a long period, little was done to support cultural activities which were enjoyed by the pass of the people. Through a great deal of campaigning, and proof of community interest, funding is now being given to an area called 'community arts'. These are artistic activities which deal with subject matter relevant to the problems of ordinary people. On the whole, they are artistic forms in which people can participate. They are not performed in grand halls and auditoria, but in village halls, in the open air, and by the roadside.

To be effective, institutions have to be responsive to real needs, and to be constantly changing, reshaping, to meet those needs. For this to occur, there has to be continuing dialogue, communication, between those for whom the services are intended. More than that, there has to be some guarantee that the views of the community will be taken into account. Only in such a situation can the process of growth continue.

Naturally, there has been a great deal of discussion as to how literally media access and participation should be applied, and considerable resistance to the notions from both governments and media professionals. Politically, there is a difference between nations as to how far the individual has a right to information, echoing the state versus individual dichotomy. Some governments regard the right to information as the sole prerogative of the state. This affects the interpretation of media access and participation. The degree to which there is a commitment to the individual's right to know and right to be heard is the logical limitation on communications access.

Resistance from media professionals is for different reasons. Traditionally, media programming has been organized hierarchically. Programme planners and producers decide the subject matter for programming, and how topics should be treated. They select the speakers or performers, and take some pride in moulding the shape of programming. Editors select which news stories to feature, how much time each story is given, its place in the running order, and the handling or treatment of the material. Any alteration of this procedure treatens the status quo. Media organizations are generally large and powerful institutions, and few of them welcome interference from outside.

Communications access and participation threaten vested interests. But it is partly for this reason that some widening of the means of control and decision-making within the media is considered desirable. There is concern that information sources are too tightly controlled, and by the wrong people. Programming and subjects for inclusion in programming are selected by the criteria of professionals, for their dramatic quality, or their intrinsic value as media material, or simply to balance or neatly juxtapose the items previously selected. Speakers may be chosen just because they are well known, or have an easy manner. Sometimes, interviewees are included for

political expediency. While all of this may lend a certain ease to the flow of programming, the results probably have little to offer that is relevant to the lives of the audience. The real needs and interests of the community may not be catered for, while the assumed needs are dealt with fully.

Politically, there can be considerable dangers in the closed doors of media institutions. Where a small core of professionals makes all the decisions, there is the fear that only certain points of view will be tolerated. Most often, these are the views of the elite. Those stories and subjects which favour a particular section of the community can be given most air-time, and the voices of sizeable majorities or minority groups need not be heard. There may be direct manipulation, but, more likely, a simple ignorance on the part of the programmers that there are other valid viewpoints. The result can be that whole areas are not given any treatment by the media, or that only one side of a story is told. This is a situation which produces not only information gaps, but misinformation.

4. COMMUNITY MEDIA AND DEVELOPMENT

Until recently, development communication borrowed heavily from the marketing approach to communications: the area known as 'persuasive communications'. Mass media were used to support development initiatives by beaming messages or directives encouraging people to support development projects. The approach taken has varied, but the usual pattern has been for broadcast media and print to inform people that development projects were taking place, to highlight the benefits likely to follow from these projects, and urge people to take advantage of them. A typical example is in the area of family planning where communications media such as posters, leaflets, radio and television would inform people that methods of family planning were available and tell them where they might be obtained, illustrate the advantages of the small family or the disadvantages of the large, and attempt to persuade the audience to practise some method of birth control. Similar communication strategies have been used to support health and nutrition schemes, agricultural projects, education.

The community media approach does not deny the necessity for the continuation of some or all of these functions for the media. There is still a need to inform, and to point out the reasons why certain development programmes are being undertaken. But there is a belief that media could and should do more for development than be the means of message transmission from one source to another. Advocates of community media believe that through involvement in the process of communications itself, development can be progressed.

Several hypotheses are relevant to this claim. One has to do with the meaning of 'communications'. Another is an understanding of what is entailed in development. A third has to do with an approach to education, and thinking in this last area, education, has contributed significantly to an enriched view of the other two. Firstly, the meaning of development communication.

(i) Development Communication

In his book Communications and Rural Development,[2] Bordenave traces the changes which have occurred historically in communication theory as applied to the development process. He shows how, from person-to-person communication involving a dialogue, mass communication technologies enabled central policy-makers to reach entire communities simultaneously. At the same time, centralized programming meant that the exchange of views essential to real communication no longer existed. The type of development communication which emerged was the marketing model described above. Communication strategies for development, based on this model, were carefully planned, and media campaigns in support of development projects were targeted at particular audience groups, just as are advertising campaigns. Mass communicators sometimes researched the listening and viewing habits of the audience, the interests and educational levels, then planned series of 'spots' designed to create interest in projects, to encourage people to try them, then reinforce this behaviour. It was a well-established technique, first tried in the United States and industralized nations, then transformed to aid development in less developed countries.

But this is a limited view of development communication, being vertical and one-sided communication. It assumes that certain behaviours and habits can be changed through the provision of messages. Mass communications used in this way have to combat the weight of tradition, of taboos, and to overcome fears. It has to be based upon a group picture of the audience, and to gauge in some way the kinds of difficulty which will arise, the problems of understanding which can occur, the fears and resistances which new developments might meet. It is not a use of communications in which there is any opportunity for the individual to find out more, to question, to learn the whys and wherefores, to voice suspicions and/or protests.

Research has shown that while people can gain information from non-personal sources, such as radio, television and the press, this information leads only a few to change behaviour. And development is concerned with behavioural change. We learn best from interpersonal contact, from communication with others directly. Mass communication techniques like those described above cannot provide this interchange.

Bordenave suggested an approach to communication for development in which communications are seen as a system. He describes a system as

'any set of interacting parts that maintains its boundaries while exchanging influences with its environment'. That is, communications are a cyclical process, into which inputs (influences) can be made at any point. A message or communication can emanate from any point, and be added to, questioned, responded to, from any other point. Each of the points in the process is equal with another. He detailed the influences (inputs) as active ingredients in the design and maintenance of the system: a reactive component which 'triggers corrective mechanisms that keep the system working towards its established goal'.(3)

In the application of the communication system for development, the vertical model of development communication is swept aside. The start point for a communication may be the community, which discusses the problems of development and possible solutions. This communication is modified or enlarged by further discussion/reaction from other groups. One of these groups making 'inputs' may be the government sector responsible for the locality, or for the development programme under discussion. There is a continuous exchange of ideas and views and information as the communication takes place. If such an approach to development communication can be applied, the belief is that development will be taking place, for participation in this process is, in itself, an aspect of development.

(ii) The Meaning of Development

Man can only liberate himself. He cannot be liberated or developed by another. For Man makes himself. It is his ability to act deliberately, for a self-determined purpose, which distinguishes him from the animals. The expansion of his own consciousness, and therefore of his power over himself, his environment, and his society, must therefore ultimately be what we mean by development. So development is for Man, by Man, and of Man.

> Nyerere, 1976, 'Liberated man - the purpose of development', Convergence 9:4, p. 10.(4)

It is easy to see the connection between the explanation of development communication outlined by Bordenave, and the definition of development given by President Nyerere. Development has something to do with personal growth and personal experience, personal decision-making. The extent to which a country can be 'developed ' by such processes as industrialization, agricultural reform, medical services, transport and communications projects is limited by the extent to which people themselves are changed by participation in development. This is a belief that 'modernization' alone is only the technology of development; it ignores the human element.

Development is a concept which has been defined often, each new definition attempting to incorporate extra dimensions as the understandings change. The major change in recent years has been from an understanding of development as a static situation, in which the world was divided between 'developed' and 'under developed' countries, to descriptors which acknowledge the dynamic. Hence the preference today for terms such as 'emergent', 'developing', or a division into 'developed countries' and "less developed countries'. All of these strive to find a more acceptable way of referring to the poorer countries in a sensitive political atmosphere.

Aside from the polemic, there are yardsticks against which the richer and poorer countries can be measured, which can be used to demonstrate relative conditions of life between countries. These are factors such as the average per capita income, literacy levels, transport and communications networks, sanitation and water supplies, standards of housing, medical services, nutrition levels and education. There is no doubt that certain countries are poorly provided as far as some or all of these indices are concerned, while others have them in abundance. Despite the debate about definitions of development and descriptors, the economic situation in different countries still gives a clear picture of advantage and disadvantage.

Beyond development as an economic, mainly quantitative concept, is the recognition of the qualitative ingredient. Recently, more emphasis has been placed upon the quality of life in definitions of development. Economic deprivation certainly dictates a life-style in which there is little room or time for pleasure, relaxation and enjoyment, and does not equip people to participate in cultural activities even if these were available. At the same time, economic improvements alone are not sufficient, nor an end in themselves. Development should include provision for self-improvement, increased freedom of expression, facilities for leisure activities, opportunities for learning, an extended social and cultural environment.

Arising from the acknowledgement of the qualitative aspects of development and the rejection of development as a static situation, the notion has evolved that development is a process of change, the direction of which can and should be determined by the people affected by it. In the sense that development is a process, rather than a state, all countries are involved in it. That is, both the so-called 'developed' and 'developing' countries are working towards improved standards of living and a richer personal environment for their inhabitants. There is unlikely to be any national group which can sit back, for even when reasonable standards have been reached, there is the need for remodelling to cater for special groups, new interests, changing situations. For example, a number of the industrialized nations are grappling with the problem of unemployment. With increased technology, there has been a move away from labour-intensive industry to machines. Unemployment

is not a short term problem, but one which will grow, and it seems likely that the usual pattern of school followed by work then retirement will not continue. Many people may never be employed, as there are not enough jobs to go round. This leaves open a number of choices, including job-sharing, early retirement, the creation of new types of paid activity. Above all, there is the need to solve the problem of enforced idleness. What can young people do if they have no career to look forward to? Will unemployment result in increased vandalism and breakdown of law and order? How can a society in which people have been brought up to seek satisfaction through work replace that sense of achievement? What resources need to be made available to the unemployed? How are people going to be 'paid' if they do not work? How can paid unemployment be made respectable? How can the society select who shall work and who shall not?

This is just one of the problems facing the more industrially advanced nations. But, even if we regard development as a continuum, a never-ending process, this does not mean that development from country to country is historically paralleled. That is, the pace, nature and routes towards a more developed situation differ from country to country. Development is not a series of known stages, through which each country passes, towards predefined goals. Because of particular social, cultural and political origins, each country approaches development from circumstances peculiar to itself, and will have objectives which tie in with those circumstances, and which will suit them. Development is more a process of self-determination, rather than simply structural change. An attempt to describe development in these terms is contained in a paper by Emile McAnany,(5) in which he sets out some of the ways in which radio can help in developing rural communities.

> "These areas (rural) generally contain a majority of the population who live a marginal existence in agricultural work that has low productivity. The people suffer from poor nutrition and health, lack of education, and a passivity and fatalism that seem to make their life more bearable. What most governments want for their large masses of rural poor is for all of this to change and for these millions of people to 'modernize', become more productive, eat better, get a basic education, produce fewer children, have better health. Some governments add to this litany of good wishes that people should also participate in their own development, have control over their lives, maintain a sense of their own cultural identity and still share in the other benefits of modern life. But few countries seem to know how all this is to be done."

The problem <u>is</u> in knowing how this is to be done. Concentration upon the economic objectives of development without attempts to retain 'cultural identity', to give people 'control' over their lives, and to enable them to participate in the process, is a tempting and seemingly swifter means of reaching development goals. But the argument <u>against</u> this perception of development as 'modernization' or economic 'progress' is that, in the long run, more can be achieved if people participate in the process. Change through consent will be less disruptive, less wasteful, will suit local conditions better and will therefore be more stable.

There is enough evidence from the past of failed development programmes which concentrated upon the tangible aspects alone to warrant interest in including the less tangible, qualitative objectives in present and future development programmes. Development projects were designed centrally, often by organizations which had little knowledge of local and regional circumstances, and thus of the effects of these projects. A major drawback of this type of 'vertical' decision-making, in which a small central body laid down the lines of national and regional development, was that the people most affected had no chance to say whether they were in favour of the project or not. They were often not informed of the reason for the changes, nor of the long-term objectives. As far as the average citizen was concerned, a great deal of money and resources was being ploughed into projects which only seemed to produce obstacles to the traditional flow of life. One result of this approach was that people could become resentful of the projects, and of project workers, or even obstructive. And without the co-operation of the people who were supposed to benefit, there was little chance of success. Examples of this one-sided approach to development planning can be found in plenty.

But the problem is more serious than a simple lack of information. In any development programme, there are a number of choices possible in deciding how resources should be spent. Where there is a need for extending medical services, for education, for roads, sanitation and housing, for irrigation and up-dating of farming techniques, decisions have to be made about which developments should come first, how much should be invested in each, and which direction development should take. For example, although literacy is desirable, how does this compare with the need for an adequate mother and child health service, or family planning? And, if it is impossible to build and equip schools all over the country, is there another way in which children and adults could be given some basic literacy skills, which would work in a rural setting? Most projects of this kind, education and health, family planning and agricultural reform, depend upon the willingness of people to take advantage of them, to participate fully in them. Otherwise there is frustration for the field worker and the planner, in trying

to introduce schemes which are unacceptable locally.

Another approach to development, one which is based upon participation, demands that the people affected by development are involved in the selection of development priorities, and the design of projects. It is an approach which attempts to build upon a consensus. Participation calls for a horizontally-layered process, in which community groups consider and decide priorities for development, and suggest the ways in which this can be achieved. It is in the operation of this procedure that community communications can play a part.

When such a radical alternative to traditional development planning is put forward, a number of difficulties can be seen. The first is that, for development to take place smoothly, there does have to be, in most cases, some central co-ordination, and there has to be central funding. Also, although there are local projects, these will frequently be part of a national programme, and there is little point in having local schemes which are juxtaposed, or even in conflict with one another, and which could never work nationally. And, although it is easy to criticize centrally conceived plans which do not take account of local conditions and local needs, there is the argument that specialists have access to special information. They can see the particular country's situation in the longer term, and in relation to international developments. All of these relationships have to be taken into account when the lines of development are drawn.

The argument against citizen participation is convincing. Communities in developing situations may have little knowledge of complex international affairs, or even of the national situation, and do not have sufficient background knowledge or experience to make their judgments viable. There may be complex and involved circumstances which have to be weighed and it could be felt that inexperienced and uneducated people would contribute little that is useful to discussions. Besides, involving a wider group in decision-making is slow and cumbersome. The needs of development are urgent and acutely felt.

No doubt some of these arguments are valid, and it is true that there are always some areas which can only be dealt with by a central planning authority. But most of the obstacles to citizen decision-making can be overcome if there is determination to find ways to extend participation. The means of informing and educating people so that they can participate effectively is the concern of this study. Communications media can give people access to the national and international situation, can overcome some of the problems of choosing priorities, can be the vehicle through which people explore alternatives with central planning units, and with communities in other regions. They can also become the backbone of the horizontal decision-making machinery, speeding up the process of discussion, suggestion and decision. They can be the means through which feedback on decisions is conveyed from periphery to centre and vice versa; they can become the platform for new ideas and inputs from the community.

The third area which has contributed to a participative approach to development communication is education, and in the following section the origins of this educational influence are discussed.

5. A PARTICIPATIVE MODEL

Participative education for development moves away from the purely information-giving, or transfer of content, model of development communication. Best known perhaps of those who challenged this one-way approach is Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator. In his work as an educator, he worked on the basis of interchangeable teacher/learner relationships; the teacher learned from the student. His practice was based on the idea that education was a process of 'conscientization', in which the community was helped to articulate its problems, then to provide the solutions for those problems. Freire believed that the average citizen (in this case, rural workers) was not an empty vessel into which facts could be poured, but a knowing being. The task for the educator was to activate the community to express its needs, to formulate solutions and to organize politically to achieve its goals. This approach was considered a radical departure from the traditional approach to rural education for it did not rely upon transmission of knowledge and skills, but focused on the community as a decision-making unit. Since these ideas were first put forward, there has been wider acceptance of the process of development as a process of individual and community self-determination.

An important ingredient in the 'conscientization' approach is the activation of the individual and the group. Earlier in this book it was suggested that the lack of opportunity to control one's own life can bring about passivity. It was this passivity which was referred to in McAnany's description of rural communities, in which there is a characteristic 'passivity and fatalism which seem to make their life [i.e. rural people's] more bearable'. Rural populations are often in the situation in which there has been no observable change for a very long time. Sometimes the changes which have occurred through development schemes have made life more difficult. And educational programmes which do not focus on rural concerns but which apply the 'transfer of information' mode can contribute to rural disruption and increase the passivity of the individual in relation to his rural environment.

A Mexican rural education project serves to illustrate the undesirable side-effects of an education programme which was not designed with the specific needs of the rural community in mind.

Peter Spain describes the Radioprimaria project of San Luis Potosi,(6) a city 260 miles north-west of Mexico City. Through the medium of radio, classes are brought to fourth, fifth and sixth grade students, a first stage in a plan to bring primary education to children in the rural communities surrounding the city. Spain pinpoints the paradox of the scheme. While the project is aimed at rural students, parents' motivation in sending their children to the classes is to enable them to move from the country into the city of San Luis Potosi. Education is seen as the means of 'getting out', and of obtaining a job in town. The education programme has little relevance for rural life, concentrating as it does on traditional education skills and information. It equips people for an urban life, and does not foster improvements in rural conditions. But employment in the town is wellnigh non-existent, and few find work there. Consequently, disappointment and a shanty town existence await those who leave the countryside in search of opportunity. In not working towards a better life in the rural areas, this education scheme seems to be counterproductive.

Spain considers that the failure of this education/communication project can be attributed partly to the lack of support services: teachers and equipment. But he also laments the fact that this development project has done little to create any sense of self-determination among local people (i.e. the sense that they could do something to help themselves). He moves on to discuss the idea of the 'use of media to develop consciousness', and concludes that communication theory must include political or consciousness formation 'as an integral part of the communication process'. He says: "This is particularly true when the media are being used to promote development through education. Underdevelopment and lack of political consciousness to help a person understand his underdevelopment and its causes contains contradictions ... Communication theory should contain more focus on the consciousnesss of the audience."(7)

Traditional communication/education projects have done little to combat some of the unfortunate side-effects of development, such as the drift to the towns and the impoverishment of rural life. No amount of media programming which paints a true picture of urban life seems to persuade the young not to go there. What is necessary is a communication system through which people can explore the problems of the village and the farm, and begin to improve conditions there so that the future becomes more attractive. This means overcoming passivity and hopelessness, the apathy which characterizes those left behind while the rest of the world moves forward.

The demand for consciousness-raising communications echoes Freire's approach to education. It is a demand which applies equally to education and communications. It rests on assumptions about those involved in and affected by education and communications. It relies on people being a part of the process of education and communications, not on the imposition of alien knowledge, thoughts, ideas and skills. And it has special relevance where the media are the tools of education - when they substitute for person-to-person communication.

Freire's model of education as exploration, problem-solving and enlightenment bears comparison with the views of President Nyerere, who outlines not a methodology but a view of the purposes of education.

> "Its purpose (education) is the liberation of Man from the restraints and limitations of ignorance and dependency. Education has to increase men's physical and mental freedom - to increase their control over themselves, their own lives, and the environment in which they live. The ideas imparted by education, or released in the mind through education, should therefore be liberating ideas; the skills acquired by education should be liberating skills. Nothing else can properly be called education."
>
> President Nyerere(8)

The words used to describe education here are 'releasing', 'liberating', and in the case of Freire 'conscientize', raising the level of consciousness. Education is about increasing freedom and removing dependency. It is about arming people with appropriate skills so that they take control of their environment, not remain the victims of it. And these skills have to be appropriate to that environment. They may not include book-learning, but will always include assessment of the group and personal situation in relation to both the physical and the political environment, analysis of problems and possibilities, construction of objectives designed to improve physical and political circumstances and action to achieve these goals.

What has this model of education and communication to offer apart from being an obviously more lengthy process? What proof is there that involving people in the creation of their own destiny will be any more successful than what has been tried in the past? How do we know that through education and communication people can be stimulated to take part in seemingly complex processes? Are those who favour community education and community communications advocating that all central planning and organization be abandoned for the sake of an unknown prescription?

There has now been enough experience in the field of community participation to give support to the view that rural communities are definitely capable of making a firm and positive contribution to the pattern and pace of development. In the latter section of this chapter and in the next, concrete examples will be given. Evidence from these projects should suffice to demonstrate that

the energies are there for greater involvement, and that communications media can help release these energies. But what about the risk entailed in adopting a community-centred approach above the tried centralized planning approach?

There are not too many risks in abandoning centralized methods. Too little real success has been achieved to give weight to arguments about 'tried and tested' models. It is not the purpose of this study to detail all the incidents of failure, nor to apportion blame. But it is a fact that the way in which funding for development projects is organized, in that it is usually for massive building and construction programmes without utilization planning and training, has led to the fruits of development being available only to the few. It is a fact that enormous amounts of money have been poured into family planning programmes to little effect. It is a fact that farmers have seemed reluctant to accept and practise innovation, and that rural life has not only changed little for the better in most countries but that, because of the imbalance between the cities and the countryside, it has often been further impoverished.

Often, blame for failure has been loaded on to the rural worker. As he has no voice, and was not consulted initially, he is an easy target, and the picture of the rural inhabitant as passive, fatalistic, ignorant, superstitious, is reinforced. But can the farmer be 'blamed' for not accepting innovation which appears (and often is) inappropriate? Should he change from growing wheat to soya bean when no one knows how to prepare appetizing meals using it, but where there is a demand for wheat? Should he, as the farmers in Nepal were encouraged to do, change from one crop to growing apples because the climate suits, when it is impossible to transport the apples to market? The farmer who 'innovates' may not be even able to feed his family. In Latin America, researchers located a potato which would grow well in the mountains but were disappointed when the farmers did not buy it. The reason was that the seed was too expensive. Should a family decide to limit family size to two children when there are no tractors to replace manpower and no money to buy fuel to run the machines, and no old age pension or social security to replace the family in sickness or old age? The mistakes can be found in plenty. But why should participative education and communications succeed where well thought out development programming has failed?

Basically, if people perceive a problem as a problem, or a possibility as a possibility, rather than have plans foisted upon them, then there is more chance of working within the real 'space' of the individual and the group. If people draw up development proposals, they have some investment in the development and are more likely to support it. If the proposals are perceived as relevant to their needs, they can see ways in which development schemes can benefit them. They can select appropriate goals from a range of alternatives; they can set up a receptive environment for the acceptance of projects locally. They can make sure that local circumstances are not ignored, that taboos are not broken, that projects are developed as wholes, not as parts.

Communications media can be the operational arm of a participative approach to development. Media can be used to gather the opinions of people as to which are the main development problems of the region, and what should be the priorities, given the limited number of resources. Media can be used as a means through which views on problems and priorities are exchanged, between members of the same community, between regions, and between community and central administrators. Media can be the means through which questions are answered and more information is given, when this is needed. Development projects suggested by one sector, be it community group or planning institution, can be discussed and analysed by the other, and these reactions can stimulate further discussion and analysis. The process itself is educative, for it involves, helps articulate, it explores the environment, and leads to the acquisition of information, and of problem-solving and communicative skills. Aside from these outcomes, it is to be hoped that the eventually agreed development objectives will contain concrete plans and will be built upon a consensus. This being the case, there is reason to hope that members of the community will actively support it.

Freire's ideas of participative education and development are supported by a communications project which took place on Fogo Island, Canada. In 1971 a film crew from the Canadian Film Board's Challenge for Change programme set out to record the events taking place in this isolated setilement in Newfoundland. What was happening was a move to resettle the inhabitants on the mainland, a plan agreed by the central planning authority as the best solution to the problems of a community which was not economically viable. Although previously the people of Fogo had supported themselves through fishing, the social and economic structure had broken down. Many of the families had already left for an easier life elsewhere, leaving a mood of despondency and low morale. The small community seemed to accept the proposals for resettlement passively, with resignation rather than enthusiasm.

The film project began the process of making a fairly typical documentary, recording the views of planners and administrators, and showing the poverty in which the people lived. But the views of the community were also recorded. The producer decided to playback the views of the planners to the people, and show film segments containing inhabitants' views to other members of the same community. Film began to be the medium of dialogue. It was found that rather than a passive acceptance of the situation, there was

considerable reluctance to uproot and resettle. Individuals gave their views on what could be done to make the settlement viable again. This stimulated those who saw the film sections, and lively discussion evolved. Out of this film-based dialogue emerged concrete plans for action. A core of people elected to stay put, and asked the Federal Government to provide funds to help them build boats to restart the fishing industry. When the film was shown to the administrators, it was so persuasive that the financial aid was voted, and the people stayed. The Fogo Island process (as this project has been called) showed that the community was capable of finding its own solutions to development problems, and that media could help people to articulate and discuss. It was the beginning of a community media methodology.

Fogo Island was an important project in a number of ways. It showed that the media could help stimulate, and even mobilize, communities. But it also demonstrated that a development project could be approached in an open-ended way. That is, rather than the educator or development worker trying to stimulate people to participate in previously decided plans, the community itself could formulate development goals, provided they had enough information on which to base decisions. The Fogo Project was a process of 'conscientization' of the community.

This first community media project gave impetus to scores of other trials in North America and Europe, and it also confirmed the findings of research in other countries. In Finland, there had been experiments with new approaches to news and current affairs broadcasting. At the time, a group of broadcasters reversed the pattern of news-gathering. Rather than selecting for news bulletins the most dramatic items, they tried to base selection on relevance. They took as their criteria the information needs of the community, and attempted to use media to fulfil those needs. The theory was (and this was based on research into community information gaps) that people could only make decisions about their own lives when they had the information on which to base those decisions. As a result of this policy, international stories with little significance for people faced with day to day problems disappeared. Having discovered where there were informational gaps, the media tried to fill them.

Unfortunately, with a change in government, this approach was dropped before it could thoroughly establish whether or not it had been effective. But out of the original scheme emerged a number of television series founded on community participation which continued the quest for information. One of these was 'Tietolaari'. The 'Tietolaari' production unit invited people with development problems to write in and, following this, the film team visited the area and worked with the people to show their situation. The final programme consisted of this filmed section, and a 'live' question and answer session between the inhabitants and decision-makers. Television was used to help clarify the issue, and was also the medium of dialogue. In most cases it helped people to get answers, where other methods had failed.

Because the processes described above represent a departure from the usual methods of organizing development, they often meet resistance. To hand over decision-making to uneducated and often illiterate people seems foolhardy. It demands a good deal of faith in the ability of the community to believe that the best solutions will be found and carried through. Some leadership roles will be threatened, and the process may seem slow and unwieldy. Also, the procedure outlined above is only a thumbnail sketch of the range of activities which are necessarily involved, and can appear too simple, too easy. The role of the development worker has not been touched upon, nor the role of the development specialist, government planner and central authority. Without careful co-ordination of all of these, the approach could result in chaos. It has also been claimed that the media are capable of playing an important and complex part, without demonstration as to how this is to be done. These aspects are dealt with later in this study. But the reversal of traditional hierarchies is an important issue, and does need to be considered.

It is true that a decision to adopt participative approach to development threatens existing hierarchies. But this does not imply that there is no role for development specialists, planners and institutional leaders. It does mean that roles change. It means seeking the views of the community before scarce resources are devoted to development projects, and a willingness to make modifications where these are suggested. It could even mean changing development priorities. It means setting up the communications machinery so that these views can be channelled, and responded to. It means being responsive, more than initiatory. It means giving moral as well as financial support to community initiatives. It means listening, as well as talking.

No doubt there are difficulties politically. Sometimes well-loved schemes will be turned down by the community they were intended to benefit. But this is probably better than the waste involved in setting up projects which later have to be abandoned. Giving the people the opportunity to express themselves about development plans and projects already under way can result in some embarrassment, as criticisms are bound to be made. If there are channels of communication open, it is likely that some criticisms will be levelled at particular people, or identifiable government sectors. But the criticisms will be made anyway, and it is better that they be made openly. At least, then, explanations can be given, or changes made. To set up a system of open discussion and fail to honour it could threaten the entire process.

The demand for a more participative use of communications media has its origins in the industrialized nations, where it has been seen as one way of evolving more responsive political and institutional structures. Application in developing countries is based upon an understanding of development as a participative process. In both situations there is a rejection of a one-way communications flow, of centralized decision-making, of a view of the community as passive and non-contributory. Both suggest an interactive relationship between community and government, through participation in the process of communication, the use of community media forms. In the section which follows is an outline of the understandings of communications access and participation which have led to the growth of community media.

References:

1. See "Access: Some Western Models of Community Media", ed. Frances J. Berrigan, Paris, Unesco, 1977.
2. Bordenave, Juan D., "Communication and Rural Development", Paris, Unesco, 1976.
3. Ibid.
4. Nyerere, "Liberated man - the purpose of development", Convergence 9:4, 1976.
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6. Spain, P. "A Study of the System of Radio Primaria in the State of San Luis Potosi, Mexico." Stanford, Calif.: Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University, 1973.
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Chapter II

The Practice of Community Communications

1. DEFINING OBJECTIVES

It has been suggested that the practice of community communications will depend upon how far the notions of access and participation are accepted within particular socio-political contexts. One of the most significant limitations on interpretation of these concepts is the definition of the rights of the individual versus the role of the state. This affects the individual's right to information, as well as access to communication channels.

Political restraints, stemming from ideological stances, are not the only limitations. Access and participation also challenge traditional hierarchies. Resistance is likely from influential persons and groups, such as those who are powerful in the commercial sector, or in bureaucratic spheres. These 'leaders' see their status quo threatened both by the socio-political implications of access and participation and the practice of these notions through an opening up of communication systems to the wider community. The closed doors of media institutions represent the means through which powerful groups retain their elite status.

Professional resistance is also likely. Media professionals are accustomed to making their own decisions, and have, generally, full artistic freedom. There is no doubt that media institutions would resent interference from the community, especially as many of them take pride in independence and impartiality. The practice of access and participation asks broadcasters to put aside some of the traditional notions of professionalism they have imbibed, and to open up to a new range of influences from the people they intend to serve. Much media material is devised as provision, based on a professional view of what the community needs in terms of information, education, entertainment. To accept the practice of access and participation invites the professional to adopt a responsive approach instead of a promotional one.

Problems of defining exactly what access and participation would mean in practice arise from the constraints outlined above. In support of the notions, advocates cite the right of information section in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

> "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

The most recent international discussion of how this right to information section related to communications access and participation took place in Belgrade in 1977. At the meeting entitled 'Self-Management, Access and Participation', the following definitions were accepted:

(a) Access

By definition, access infers the ability of the public to come closer to communication systems, and in concrete terms it can be related to two levels: of choice and of feedback.

At the LEVEL OF CHOICE, access includes:
(i) the individual right to communication materials, the right to listen to or view desired programmes, when a person wants, where he/she wants,
(ii) the availability of a wider range of materials, the choice of which is made by the public instead of being imposed by production organizations (informational and educational materials, services and alternative programmes).
(iii) the transmission of materials requested by the public.

At the LEVEL OF FEEDBACK, access implies:
(i) the interaction between producers and receivers of messages.
(ii) direct participation by the audience during the transmission of programmes.
(iii) the right to comment and criticise.
(iv) means of keeping in touch with producers, administrators and the managers of communication organizations.

(b) Participation

Participation implies the involvement of the public in production and in the management of communication systems. It also operates at different levels - of production, decision-making and planning.

At the PRODUCTION LEVEL, participation implies:

(i) unrestricted opportunities for the public (individuals or groups) to produce programmes and to have access to professional help.

(ii) making available to the public technical facilities and production resources (i.e. a more advanced level of participation).

At the DECISION-MAKING LEVEL, participation implies involvement of the public in:

(i) programming: content and duration of programmes; scheduling of programmes.

(ii) the management, administration and financing of communication organizations.

At the PLANNING LEVEL, participation comprises the right of the public to contribute to:

(i) the formulation of plans and policies for communication enterprises: definition of objectives, principles of management and future programming.

(ii) the formulation of national, regional and local communication plans.

In summary, access refers to the use of media for public service. It may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programmes, and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations. Participation implies a higher level of public involvement in the production process, and also in the management and planning of communication systems.

(c) Self-Management

Participation may infer no more than representation and consultation of the public in decision-making. On the other hand, self-management is the most advanced form of participation. In this case, the public exercises the power of decision-making within communication enterprises, and is fully involved in the formulation of communication policies and plans. (1)

A reading of these definitions gives a clear picture of a demand for radical reforms in the management of communications systems. In fact, the range is so extensive and far-reaching that it would be over-optimistic to expect that such a total reorganization could come about in the short term. But it would be possible to select priorities for change. Of the first notion, access, concentration upon developing methods of feedback would eventually result in a different method of planning and production of programming, provided that the feedback was given weight. Inevitably, this would extend the choice of programming. Feedback is probably the most important ingredient of the 'access' principle.

Participation in decision-making may be the most vital component of the next category, participation. This principle also includes the right to participate in the planning and production of media programming, but not everyone would want or need to be involved in the practicalities. More important is the opportunity to take part in decisions about the range of topics which should be covered, the methods of selecting material, and participation in the management, administration and financing of media institutions.

Of the three areas, access, participation and self-management, the last seems to contain the most far-reaching and total form of involvement. For it concerns not only access to information and participation in the means of production, but community management of the communication system and the development of communication policies. It entails broadening of the structure of communications institutions to include community representation in equal partnership. If this self-management principle can be applied, the communications system becomes not only responsive to the community, but responsible to it, and the responsibility of the community. Although self-management of the communication resource may seem extreme, there is an example of one approach to this in Yugoslavia. (2)

Aside from the political and professional obstacles, it might be argued that it would be impossible, technically, to introduce all the aspects of access and participation detailed in these definitions. But the technology does exist already to enable all of these community media forms to be introduced, given that there is commitment to them, and the availability of economic resources. Modifications to production hardware can make it possible for non-professionals to produce programming. This includes use of Super 8 millimetre film and lightweight video equipment, simplified studio and editing consoles, portable sound tape recording systems. Production using this equipment can take place as outside recordings, which are then fed into centralized broadcast organizations for transmission, or in separate community communications centres and local radio and television stations specially adapted for non-professional use. Additional channels for radio and television could give people a wider choice of programming, and the use of domestic sound and video playback machines makes it possible for the individual to choose from a wide range of material, to choose the time to listen or view. There is already one experiment in the United States in which audiences can participate in discussions and debates through the cable system, with feedback system attached to domestic TV sets. Immediate feedback can also be obtained through the use of the telephone, either by transmission of calls directly, or through computer-linked 'voting'. Besides these possibilities which basically relate to broadcast and non-broadcast programming, there is a range of information systems which could add to the communications profile. One of these now being tried in the

United Kingdom is 'Viewdata'. This is a computer based information retrieval system in which the user calls up 'pages'. These appear on the user's television screen. Factual information is likely to be the main component of the pages, but there are some interesting entertainment possibilities. The advantage of 'Viewdata' is that the system is tied in with information banks, so that the user can pursue any aspect of a topic, to whatever depth he chooses. It is an interactive system. Other data systems are CEEFAX and ORACLE, which provide information print-outs, and are mainly of interest to business.

An interesting experiment has been carried out in Alaska wherein isolated communities made use of the Hermes satellite to communicate with one another, and this facility could be extended to other communities in similar circumstances. Then there are various ways in which two-way radio transmitters, cable links, telephone-wireless combinations, might work. To supply the technology to meet the access/participation demand would be possible, and the capability is there.

Not surprisingly, it is not in the technological area that controversy arises. Problems continue in the political sphere, for the reasons outlined above, and others. An argument which has not so far been mentioned but which is pertinent is, given that there are development priorities in both industrialized and less well developed countries, what importance should be given to reshaping the communications profile? This is a question which cannot easily be answered here, but one which will no doubt continue to be a central point in discussions of communication and development policies.

As a result of the political, professional and economic obstacles to communications access, participation and self-management, there is a gap between what it is possible to achieve in the way of reform and new developments and actual achievements. There are examples of community media in practice, and some of these will be described in the following pages. In some cases, there have been modifications to major media institutions to allow for greater participation, and to open the doors to non-professional production. Community media techniques are being used for a great deal of development work, alongside more traditional methodologies. Community media centres have sometimes been set up, incorporating self-management by the community, and there are some local radio and television stations which rely completely upon community involvement. An optimistic view of the impact of the demand for 'democratization' of communication processes could be gained by a review of growth in this area.

But there seems to be a cut-off point. Innovation has occurred locally and even regionally, and there are numbers of independent, peripatetic schemes in operation, linked to particular development schemes. As yet, however, reform has done little to affect the major media institutions, and there has been no revamping of country communication systems as a whole. Self-management of the communication system is probably the most radical component of those definitions accepted by the Belgrade conference and perhaps for that reason it will be the last to be implemented, and the most strongly resisted. Opponents to this form of community media raise the question of cost, of the impracticality of involving the average citizen in a network of decision-making units, of the social and financial investment which has been made in the present system, which works well enough. Underlying all this is the reality. To switch from existing methods of exploiting the communication resource means reshaping patterns of government, of institutional organization, of the political sphere itself. Overall change requires a political decision. In the end, self-management might be achieved through sustained pressure to bring about government interventions and major policy changes. Whether enthusiasm for reform can be sustained depends upon the effectiveness of existing community media experiences, and community appetite for further involvement. For the time being, as the examples selected here show, inroads have been made in the setting of independent, alternative structures, and in modifications to central organizations which complement but do not threaten the existing system.

2. BACKGROUND TO PRESENT PROJECTS

Despite the seemingly pessimistic note sounded above, a good deal of experience in the use of community media for development has already been gained. In the next chapter, projects which have arisen out of this experience will be examined in some depth. But there is some purpose in a brief review of what might be called the 'seminal' work in the field, as a basis for a more detailed study later.

A contrast to the 'Radioprimaria' project described in the previous section, in which it was claimed that the outcome of conflicting goals might in fact retard rural development is the Tabacunda radio project in Ecuador. As with the 'Radioprimaria' scheme, audio media occupy the principal role.

Mensaje Campesino (the Farmer's Message) is an open broadcast project for rural people in Tabacunda. In this area are an estimated 42,000 illiterate adults. The project is designed to provide programming for farmers by farmers,[3] and uses the forty radio school centres which broadcast on the Tabacunda transmitter. Attached to the radio school centres are voluntary workers called 'auxiliares'. With money made available by the University of Massachusetts Nonformal Education Project, and under the leadership of Padre Isaias Barriga, the project distributed forty simple tape recorders and a supply of tapes to the

auxiliaries. After two hours' training in recording, the auxiliaries were invited to make the recorders available to local people to produce programme items which would feed into two weekly half hour broadcasts transmitted by Radio Mensaje.

Production of the programme materials is carried out by the auxiliaries. These are supplied with blank tapes, which they use to record local events, meetings, discussions, interviews and music. When the tapes are returned to Radio Mensaje, they are listened to, then edited into one or other of the half hour programmes.

At first, programming contained a great deal of music, and this has continued to feature strongly. But there are reports of development projects, such as the collective which recorded how they had joined together to build new houses for co-operative members. Another tape contained a recording of a meeting with an official from a development project, as an audio record of the promises which had been made.

Prior to the use of recorders, community participation in the Radio Mensaje project was limited to those who could write letters and have these read over the air. Recording enables many more of the illiterate population to have a means of expression and, hopefully, to develop a rural medium where previously communications had centred on the urban voice and the urban concern.

This project demonstrates the fairly minimal outlay needed to provide an interactive communication system. Given that the broadcast transmitter was already available, additional costs of providing the recording equipment were small. But there are two factors which would have to be taken into account in extending a project of this type to other developing countries. The first is that, through the existing radio centres, there was a grass roots person-to-person link (i.e. the auxiliaries). Without this network, such a scheme would be difficult. Secondly, the project is operating in a context in which there is freedom for the community to voice opinion on any development topic. Inevitably, some of the programmes contain criticisms of the lack of resources, the slowness with which projects are carried out and the shortcomings of administrators. Unless there is the possibility of airing these views, along with constructive ideas which emerge from the community about its own projects, such a scheme would lose credibility and with that, community participation.

Begun as a pilot project, to see what would happen when the recorders were made available to the auxiliaries, Mensaje Campesino has proved that rural people can participate fully in a communication programme. Evaluation of this project showed that it lived up to the hopes of the project planners that this means of expression would create 'a heightened feeling of self-worth and increased community development knowledge'.(4)

A more widely known project using radio is the 'Movimento de Educacão de Base' (MEB) in Brazil. The project used radio to teach illiterates in the north-east of Brazil and was originally piloted by the Ministry of Education and the Catholic Bishops' Conference. This project, although radically changed now, has been a model for many other schemes incorporating radio schools.

The MEB movement was inspired by the Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO) Radio Sutatenza experience in Colombia, in which radio was used to extend adult education to the rural poor. But unlike the Radio Sutatenza programme, MEB started out with the intention of 'conscientization' rather than to impart purely technical educational skills. Conscientization, politicization and animation for social change were defined as the prime objectives of the project, and determined its overall framework. The outlines were evolved by mass media experts under the leadership of Marina Bandeira, Secretary General of MEB, but with input from educationists, philosophers, sociologists, economists and anthropologists. Throughout, reassessment of the project was carried out in regional and national staff meetings.

There were four links in the organizational chain. First, there were the basic works units based on diocesan radio schools (the 'sistema educativo'). The second link was the local team, teachers and social workers who carried out the basic education programme. These used the diocesan radio station, and travelled round the surrounding area, working through local communities and using the radio schools. Thirdly, there were the 'animators', nominated to the local team by members of the communities the team visited. These were brought together for training before beginning work in their own communities. The fourth level was the national team, composed of bishops and representatives from the Ministry of Education. Aside from co-ordinating the whole project, this group was responsible for organizing new basic units and selecting and training personnel.

Using up to eleven radio stations in the north-east area of Brazil, MEB broadcast 'promotional and educational messages', with the intention of providing motivational and support material for the work of the local teams in their dialogue with the rural populations. In the field, the local teams adopted a non-directive approach to education. They set about helping local groups to identify their real problems through discussion and role-play. Discussion and the acting out of situations was followed by analysis, the objective of which was to 'allow the campesinos to see their own situation objectively and also to facilitate the field workers' understanding of the campesino's values, preoccupations and aspirations.'(5) Teaching of literacy and numeracy, both through the radio schools and in the field was done as they arose in the discussion of issues affecting the lives of the population, rather than in isolation.

Radio was never the main thrust of the MEB

project; but it serves to illustrate the way in which radio can be used to support participation in development and to encourage development along lines appropriate for the community. It was used as a motivational medium, to give a focus, both nationally and locally, to the work carried out at other levels, ensuring cohesion of the overall programme.

Evaluation of the project showed that between 1962 and 1964, when the MEB operated 5,000 radio schools, 400,000 peasants learned to read. After 1964, with the change of government and with that the necessity to drop the 'conscientization' role, numbers fell off. The system operates now as a much more conventional organization, offering fundamental education.

Similar approaches to those pioneered by MEB operate in a number of Latin American countries at the present time. In Honduras, the same approach, that of combining basic adult education through radio schools with leadership training and community organization, has been organized under CONCORDE (The Co-ordinating Council for Development). Nowadays this integrated approach to the teaching of skills with conscientization is termed 'desarrollo integral' meaning integral development: social, educational, economic and political.

The Honduran projects have been running for seventeen years, developing further the Popular Promotion Movement or campesino-based mobilization approaches tried in Colombia and through the MEB in Brazil. One important feature of the Honduran project is that it has been the subject of an evaluation study, in which not only the PPM achievements in functional education were assessed, but also the extent to which the conscientization aspect has been effective. A full account of this project has been written by Robert A. White who concludes a chapter describing the project and the evaluation of it with the comment:

> "It appears that the PPM is moving closer to the point where it can assert the validity of a campesino culture as a viable alternative in a modern industrial society and back this with the economic power of increased productivity and the political power of mass organization."(6)

The radio schools described above, which have taken root in the Latin American countries, have had an overtly socio-political objective. But the radio forum, originating in Canada as the Farm Forum, then first tried in India, has many elements in common with the ACPO model, without an expressed conscientization objective.

One of the first radio forums to follow the Indian project was in Ghana, during the years 1964-5. It was mounted with aid from Unesco and the External Aid Office of Canada, and concentrated on forty villages. In twenty villages there were two radio forum groups formed; in another twenty, there was one radio forum each, and forty villages served as a control, with no radio forum groups. Average membership of the forum was twenty. The main objective was to see how far the radio forums could be successful in 'educating adults and stimulating village self-help efforts'. During the project, twenty half-hour programmes were broadcast, and each month a feedback programme was mounted, through which participants could express their own views. Research carried out by Abell (1968) concluded that the project was successful in terms of its educative and animation objectives, and that the radio forum was a more powerful means of stimulating people towards self-help activities than radio alone.

There have been other successful applications of the radio forum model. The Tanzanian experience dates from 1967, when the first radio forums were broadcast by non-government agencies. Since the first government-promoted forums in 1969, topics covered include Tanzanian socialism, the importance of political participation, national independence, health care, food production and nutrition. The strength of the Tanzanian radio forums is that they are organized on a campaign basis, each campaign initiated by a different central development agency in co-operation with others. There is therefore no permanent bureaucratic structure for radio forums, each one starting as a new initiative with particular goals.

Senegal provides another example of the successful extension of the radio forum. Forums began operation in 1969, and were designed to provide rural education through a structure involving community group listening and feedback. After initial setbacks in getting the project under way, personal interventions by the President and the creation of an inter-ministerial body to organize and administer the 'Radio Educative Rurale' (RER) allowed the project to begin. The forums were concentrated in the groundnut growing regions, where a decline in the profitability of that crop was causing considerable distress.

The key feature of the Senegalese radio forums was community participation. Most programmes were recorded on location, and contained the voices of the community talking about their problems and concerns. These were heard by neighbouring groups with similar, related problems, and resulted in written responses being sent in to the central programming office from village listening groups.

As could be expected in a situation where there are severe development problems and economic hardship, the government and its agents came in for strong criticism. But, despite the problems and embarrassments caused, there was no going back on the original pledge of openness. Rather, the government responded by introducing some practical reforms. Like the Tanzanian project described previously, the implications of giving the community access were realized and taken into account before the project started. There were no major surprises in the critical content of feedback, although there was surprise at the volume of correspondence. As in all community media

approaches which set out to give access to the media, acceptance that there will be criticisms is a must.

The projects described above are all based on radio, and it seems likely that the main media for development will continue to be audio media. This is not only because television is often limited to urban centres, whereas it is rural communities which have the greatest communication needs and where development itself is most often focused. It is also because, without extra technology such as cable and the telephone, television is a less flexible medium for community work. It is still true that the portable radio can be carried into the fields, and that it is easier to make local recordings on sound cassettes than on video. Perhaps one of the greatest advantages of community media forms is that they have led to a renewed interest in the value of sound, both in so-called 'developing' countries and in Western industrialized nations.

Even where television is available it is a new medium, and not yet the focal point for a great deal of experimentation or innovation. Consequently, there are few examples of projects using television for contact with rural groups, but one project which used both radio and television was the Campo y Productividad (Farm and Productivity) project in Mexico. This was set up in 1971 to illustrate new farming techniques, and also to train farmers in the processes of decision-making, so as to help them make more rational decisions in administering their farms. Like all community media approaches, the emphasis was not on simply passing on information but on setting alternatives and providing the facts so that farmers could make their own judgments. The project also set out to devise better ways to make use of media, and evaluation was written in.

This project was sponsored by the National Productivity Centre, originally set up with ILO support, and planned by Dr. Luis Ramiro Beltran, a communication specialist. A series of television programmes was designed to 'motivate and sensitize the farm audience for parallel and/or ulterior instruction training processes and to diffuse 'basic concepts, administrative policies and technological processes'.(7) The production team was strengthened by the addition of an agronomist, an adult educationist, a mass communication specialist and a reporter. Each programme lasted 28 minutes, and included songs, jingles, interviews and reports. All were based on the needs of the farmers, and all the areas chosen for discussion were well known to them. Posters and other publicity were distributed in the villages. To monitor the programmes and to feed in reaction, four telegroups led by an expert were set up, and evaluation based on these groups and individual viewers was carried out after each programme.

It was found from research that the television series was an effective way of passing on informational and motivational material. Of interest are the findings that the telegroup idea worked well, and could be most useful when the group had a monitor or co-ordinator who would help lead the discussion and suggest practical action groups could take. It was felt that there should be much more interaction between the viewing groups and the programme-makers, so that modifications to the programmes could be made all the time. Another research recommendation was that group leaders should be carefully trained and have a clear idea of the objectives and orientation of the series. It was also pointed out that a similar approach would work well regionally, so that programming could be devised which tied in more specifically with local needs. If this were done, then feedback from telegroups would have more consistency, and that much more chance of altering programme content.

The 'Campo y Productividad' project seems to show that television can be a valuable community media form for development, where it is available. But a medium which has certainly gained popularity already is portable video. In the previous section, the Fogo Island experiences with video were described. Experimentation with this medium in an underdeveloped area of Canada provided the starting point for numerous developing country projects. The same principles have been applied: that of a team of 'animators' or 'facilitators' making recordings with small groups, and using the replay of these tapes both as a means of bringing groups together, and as a stimulus for discussion of the issues which emerged. Video as a development medium is intended to activate the community, in contrast with traditional uses of media which have tended to entertain a passive audience. Because video materials are played back to the people who took part in the production, it can be an immediately involving medium. One of the earliest developing country video projects was the Tanzanian Year 16 project carried out by a six member video team in three villages in 1971-2.

The aim of the project was to 'produce a record of the historical experience of the Ujama Movement: the socialistic, communalistic approach to rural development'. The record was to come not from the organizers nor officials, but from the people themselves. Video was to be used as a means of self-expression, so making people more critically aware of their situation, to promote a dialogue between villagers and their outside leaders, to stimulate self-help projects and also to build up a large library of audio-visual materials on all aspects of development.

The project began in 1971, and was given the support of the Tanzanian government for fifteen months. During the periods spent in each of the three villages (up to six months), the video team shared day to day life, attending meetings, taking part in discussions, sitting in on adult education classes and participating in village festivities. The recording equipment was always on hand, so

that events, discussions and situations could be taped as they occurred. Twice a week a video playback screening was held to which everyone was invited. Discussion arising from the showings was also taped, this formula given the video workers a good idea of the reaction to the type of programming being made.

At the end of the project, there were two hundred hours of audio-visual material, catalogued according to the development topics covered. These are historical, political, social, educational and economic subjects. In addition to the concrete outcome, the video workers considered that the process had been successful in stimulating the communities, in making them more critically aware, and in turning 'passive attitudes into active ones'.(8) In the words of the villagers as noted by Peter Schultz: "We must not wait for government help but start work ourselves - if we wait for the government to help us we can wait until paradise!" The video team also felt that the process had been successful in bringing about effective dialogue between villagers and central administration, although not with local officials. These often felt threatened by the process. As a result of showing village-made tapes to administrators, direct action was taken to sort out problems and difficulties, and local officials felt that representations had been made 'over their heads'.

The tapes made during the fifteen months of operation have been widely used in educational institutions in Tanzania, and by various government departments. It is the intention of the government to continue the taping, and a Video Communication Centre is being set up to provide equipment, training, production and distribution facilities for audio-visual materials.

There are numerous other examples of video successes in bringing about initial communication between members of the same community, and between local people and administrators. Many of these have been more specifically connected to particular development projects, as in Rajasthan, where the fact that farmers in Ajmer needed water was brought to the attention of officials, and in Mariainad (Kerala) where it was used to facilitate communication and co-operation at a meeting of voluntary youth groups. In Sri Lanka video was used to find out how communications media could help improve the government's family planning programme, and in Guatemala video communication was used to promote soya cultivation. In Gambia, video tapes were produced on a number of development topics, and used to attract people to meetings. In the Gambian project video played a role similar to film and television programming. In the Philippines, a mobile recording unit was used to record seminars and plays on the subject of family planning. These were then toured to a number of villages, with the intention of stimulating other discussions and creative activities on the same theme.

Since the early video experiments, more experience in the use of the medium has been gained. These projects have shown that video is an appropriate method of establishing communication links, and of helping communities to concretize problems. It has been useful in opening up channels for dialogue across bureaucratic boundaries.

The projects have also demonstrated the limitations. That is, video is not a magic medium; it needs to be used with full field work support, and must be used sensitively and honestly. It cannot carry out the development work, merely show what needs to be done and stimulate action. It cannot substitute for careful planning and execution of development projects, but it can sharpen awareness of the kinds of development which are needed and which are feasible.

The popularity of portable video seemed, in the early seventies, to spell the end of film as a medium for community work. Time delays in processing and the specialism of editing made film a far less flexible tool for feedback and analysis. Since then great advances have been made in quick processing of Super 8 millimetre film, which is a cheap and reliable medium. As with portable video, the use of Super 8 millimetre by large production companies for location work has pushed forward this refinement, so that this has benefited users working on development projects. It may be found, in the long run, that film will again supersede video as further advances are made.

A certain area of growth is in the use of sound tape. The Tabacunda project was mentioned earlier in which auxiliaries used portable sound tape-recorders to feed in local material to the central broadcast unit. Sometimes, open-reel or cassette recorders have been used independently, without connection with a broadcast programme. One of these is in Guatemala, where cassette recordings on the subject of health and nutrition have been used with coffee plantation workers.

This project illustrated the simplicity of use the sound cassette allows. Women on the coffee plantation at Finca Maria de Lourdes were interviewed about diet, food preferences, shopping habits, gardening and domestic animals. They were also asked about use of a protein supplement. Incaparina, which was available in the local shop, but which was not much used despite the protein deficiency in the workers' diet. Other health specialists were interviewed and gave advice on the content of the tape, including the local doctor.(9) From this, a profile built up of the kind of information need of the community.

Eventually, fifteen separate cassatte-tape 'programmes' were compiled. On each, there was a consistent format consisting of music and announcement of the principal theme, a dramatized story dealing with some of the key health/nutrition points followed by a summary of these points, 'spot' announcements, a story (dramatized or read), an interview or talk, another

section, more announcement 'spots' or a quiz, then the closing announcement or reminder and music.

Recording of the cassettes was carried out locally. Non-professional people took part in the dramatizations or readings, and doctors, teachers and ordinary mothers were interviewed. Three cassette recorders were bought and placed in the three plantation 'pilas' where women congregate to do laundry. A local girl was recruited to change the tapes each morning and afternoon, and to change the batteries when required.

Monitoring of the project showed some concrete results. For example, one of the programmes suggested ways of cooking Incaparina, and a check with local providers showed that demand for this food had stepped up markedly. The local nurse was called upon much more frequently, both for general medical problems and to help with births, and it seemed that a prejudice against the use of rubber gloves in the delivery of babies had been counteracted. A separate tape was produced on the need to inoculate chickens in which a free chick was promised the first hundred people who could repeat a key phrase. These were given away in less than one hour, much to the sorrow of the large queue.

Roy Colle and his wife, Susana, who planned and prepared the materials, were very satisfied with the impact of the project and confident that it could be a method of reaching rural groups in other areas. Roy Colle commented: 'The basic system provides the kind of flexibility, simplicity, reinforcement and "local-ness" needed for this type of rural development communication.'(10)

Obviously, there are many variations possible on the 'pila' project. The use of batteries makes this medium suitable for places without electricity, and it is possible that listeners could record their own discussion and comments on the tapes following the programming, or could make their own programmes. Apart from this, cassette tapes are a good way of reaching illiterate people where other media fail.

3. CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA

The examples referred to above have been chosen to illustrate both the range of media which can be used for community communications, and the types of methodology developed. They also show the varying degrees to which the access/participation definitions are being applied. That is, all of these projects do give people access to media to a certain extent, and they all include some participation. However, there are probably ways in which even these schemes could be extended to bring in greater participation if it were demanded. It is difficult to distinguish between limitations which are made on practical grounds, given the aims of the project and the needs they are attempting to fulfil, and those which are made for more covert political reasons.

It would be unrealistic to expect that each and every community media project would involve access and participation to the same degree, given the various differences between situations and development objectives. For example, some projects concentrate more upon involvement in preplanning, while others allow for maximum participation in production. Sometimes, more weight is placed upon feedback than on either of these two.

Equally, community media projects are not limited to particular kinds of media, as these projects show. Although not mentioned here, community communications techniques have been used with print media, such as local newspapers, pamphlets and booklets, and they are often an ingredient in traditional communications projects. A good demonstration of this is where a local newspaper contains a community section which is built up out of readers' queries and suggestions, or contributions. While the bulk of the paper may appear to follow more orthodox lines in production, the credence given to community response and suggestion will probably influence the way in which the paper as a whole is put together.

Community communications are an approach or a technique; they are not limited to particular types of media, to particular types of communication, to particular uses. The type of involvement, be it feedback, self-management, participation in production, planning or performance, can vary according to circumstances and resources. In some cases, community involvement may be total, as in the running of a local radio station or a community media centre. At other times, perhaps when the main purpose is the need for information, this type of community commitment may be unnecessary and even wasteful of community resources. Well-developed feedback networks might be a better way of serving information needs.

Given that there is an interest in community communications in a particular location, the first consideration should be: are there the right conditions for this approach to be a success? Some of these conditions are listed below, and the projects detailed in the following section will be assessed in terms of them. No doubt other considerations might have to be weighed in any particular situation, such as topographical difficulties, or when communication problems are more precise. But the list below, though not exclusive, could be a guide to whether community media approaches have any chance of being successful.

A. Political Back-up

Enough has been written already in the pages of this book to emphasize the need for recognition by political leaders of the value of community communications. There are two aspects which are relevant here. Firstly, if people are invited to take part in a dialogue about development, there

must be an assurance that their suggestions, criticisms and questions will be treated with respect. All too frequently, people have been asked to give up time to pre-planning, to public meetings, to the filling in of questionnaires and so on, when important issues are being discussed, yet final outcomes take no heed of their views. They are completely overruled by the so-called 'experts'. Once there is even the suspicion that this is likely to happen, and that requests for participation are 'spoof', credibility is lost. The consensus really has to be followed once it is arrived at (and this commitment needs to be made before participation is invited), and it must be seen to have been followed. That is, even though a community decision may be acted upon, no one will know this was happened unless there is continuing feedback so that people can see that their contribution did matter.

Secondly, opening up communication channels will always enable adverse criticism to be voiced. For this reason, before encouraging people to speak their minds, there must be the assurance that there will be no repercussions, such as victimization. This is of prime concern to the community media co-ordinator. It could be positively harmful to urge people to freely express their views if, as a result, their means of livelihood (or lives) could be in jeopardy from those they have, in good faith, complained about, whether this be local officials, or government itself. Needless to say, a situation in which positive opinions only can be expressed in safety goes against the very nature of the community media approach.

B. Qualitative Notions of Development

It would be difficult to see the value of community involvement in development communication where the qualitative aspects of development were not accepted. If development is seen in economic terms only, then there really is room only for the economist in discussions. The kinds of contribution which ordinary people can make will certainly have value for the long term economic future, but they will probably have more to do with the quality of life in a wider sense than simple cost-benefit analysis would allow. The benefit of community opinion here is that, although one scheme may seem to offer the quickest route to prosperity, it will not do so unless it is supported by those who are required to make the changes, for example, farmers or fishermen. The members of the community can introduce variables into a discussion from their local knowledge, which might mean the difference between wasted investment and project viability. A simple example is where it might seem ideal to switch all agriculture from one crop to a more nutritious one. Local farmers may know that even where this product is available, it is not used. This does not mean that the proposal is quashed altogether, as it is probable that a staged changeover would work, coupled with information for housewives.

C. Flexibility

Development plans have to be flexible enough, and community participation built in early enough, for changes to be possible. Participation can sometimes mean that representation is brought in only at the implementation stage: the outline and detail have been decided, community assistance is needed to get local people to accept the changes. Usually this lip-service involvement is too late, and creates more problems than it solves as frustrations are felt and expressed. Ideally, participation should begin at the beginning, in the defining of problems. Even here, community media approaches might demonstrate that what seemed to be the problem was not perceived by local people as a problem at all, and some other consideration might be uppermost in their minds. Flexibility in terms of willingness to accept a change in orientation is a must, just as is openness to alternative solutions to agreed development difficulties. Most difficult of all is the situation in which the group calls for a change in development pricrities, or discontinuation of a favoured scheme. These are the types of problem which the use of community communication techniques can throw up.

D. Local Support

Where the purpose of community media is to encourage local initiatives, and to stimulate self-help, support needs to be given. This may mean financial support, and it will almost certainly mean moral support. This implies that there must be involvement of local officials, so that they do not feel 'cut out' or threatened, and so that they can use their offices to assist the community where needed, with skills and financial resources. Primarily, the onus is on the development worker to involve local officials rather than to present them with a fait accompli, and this means keeping up good communication links with all those departments in the area who will be affected by changes.

E. Training

Community media workers need training. Knowledge of the media is not enough. More important perhaps than media skills are community development skills, experience in group work, knowledge of local conditions, of local people and local problem. The community media worker needs to know the local and national power structure, how the relationships between different sectors in the community work, and needs to be comfortable in the environment. Training should include techniques of non-directive learning, experience in working with adults, and sophisticated organizational skills.

F. Effective Communications

There is little point in inviting people to contribute to discussions when there is little chance that their conclusions will be heard. There have to be good channels of communication between groups. For example, if there is a regional broadcast based on community participation, the means of participation must be available. Sometimes this can mean the availability of a communication technology, such as a tape recorder, for items to be recorded locally, but it also has to be possible for that tape to reach the programme co-ordinators in time for it to be included in programming. More often than not this is an organizational problem, but a vital one if credibility is to be maintained.

Where views are solicited, there has to be a way in which views can be collected. This may seem obvious, but in a largely illiterate community, or one in which there is no real postal service, alternatives to the written word have to be found. As it is likely that few people will own tape-recorders, these have to be made available, and people to operate them and transport tapes to the centre have to be recruited. This does not mean training teams of semi-professionals, but making the technology accessible to ordinary people.

G. Suitable Technology

The technology has to be suited to the development task. For example, where there is no local film processing, film would not be the medium to use for involving people in discussion, except perhaps for showing leader films to trigger local reaction. If portable video is not available and there is a need for instant playback, sound-tape would be the best alternative, rather than film. On the other hand, filmstrip combined with sound-tape could work well as a means of recording views, and might be more reliable than video if maintenance is difficult. Tape-slide is often a very useful medium for arousing interest, and also allows programming to be paced to suit the group. Again, this would be limited in usefulness if developing of slides were not local. An alternative could be sketches or drawings to accompany the tapes, and these could be done on the spot by members of the community, as could displays and posters. The main thing is that the medium should be chosen to suit the task and, because the task is optimum community involvement, conventional communication judgments might not apply. In other words, media can be selected for use in development work on the grounds of professionalism: the medium which is most durable, which gives the clearest picture, which will form the best record of the project. Community media do not mean second-rate media, so that these aspects do not apply, but they are less important than accessibility, immediacy, flexibility. The end product is not to be measured in media terms, but in terms of the quality of stimulation aroused. Often, there may be no media product as such.

H. Continuity

Use of community media to help people articulate, to involve them in decision-making, to stimulate self-help, create an expectation. When these techniques are introduced to a community, there is the intention that traditional patterns of control and management, such as hierarchical methods, will be done away with. For this reason, it makes little sense for such a process to be put into effect, then withdrawn. Ideally, if some form of communication technology is made available, the facility should continue to be available, even after the 'animator' has left. One of the aims of community communication workers should be to train local people to continue work alone, or with occasional support from outside.

It is not only the continuing availability of technology that is important (although this implies that the technology chosen should be suitable for community management), but the opportunity for participation in development should also continue. It is fairly unrealistic for a project to encourage new forms of social and political organization and then, when one cycle has been completed, to withdrew this opportunity. The lines of communication must remain open, to be the means of continuing dialogue between groups, or to be used as and when the need arises. This means that it is difficult to limit the scope of access and participation. For example, it is inadvisable to say: 'You can be open and critical of this development scheme, but not of the other', or 'Participation is invited in this area, not in that.' Because access and participation touch some fundamental freedoms, they are not exclusive.

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Chapter III

The Community Media Methodology

The projects described in the previous chapter show the range of media which have been turned to development purposes, and the various aims they have tried to fulfil. Other media apart from those listed have worked on the same principle: through close contact with rural and illiterate communities educational and communication needs are identified, problems are pin-pointed and media of some means are used to stimulate discussion and problem solving. Sometimes more traditional communications have been used, such as drama. The local situation is represented in dramatic form and members of the community participate in acting out their difficulties in front of their friends and neighbours. Use of drama, puppet theatre, dance and other 'folk media' to replace the audio-visual media can sometimes have more flexibility in that these forms can be modified, expanded and elaborated according to the dictates of each particular group. Again, whereas I have concentrated on electronic media, such as sound and visual tape recording, radio and television, some projects have used slide-sets, photographs, drawings, and cheaply produced print and posters.

Community communication is not advocating the use of particular media. There is no favouritism intended, and no hierarchy of media is implied. Community communication is a theory and a methodology which ought to be transferable between media. In other words, if the basic aims and purposes of a project which took place in one location are appropriate in another, it should be possible to substitute the media elements, yet apply a similar methodology. In any case, it is rarely possible to transfer media materials from one community media project to another; the fact that the media materials arise out of and are locked into specific localities makes them inappropriate for use elsewhere. This is quite apart from the fact that in many instances it is the involvement in the creation or the design of the materials themselves which is the essential ingredient in the success of the community media approach.

The best community media are those which are available locally, which can be handled and operated by non-professionals, which enable ordinary people to participate in production and operation, which are robust, and which can be serviced and maintained locally. And, of course, they are the media which the project can afford. In this section, three projects are examined in more detail. They show the development of methods of working which suit particular tasks, and choice of media which suit particular conditions. These projects deal with basic development issues which affect most countries. They are not the only methods which could have been successful, but they have been selected because, from a range of possibilities, choices have been made, and these choices seem appropriate.

1. AUDIO CASSETTE LISTENING FORUMS PROJECT (ACLF)

Background and Context

The Audio Cassette Listening Forums Project took place in Tanzania during 1977-8. The technology it used was the audio-cassette recorder, and it intended to reach and involve rural women. In this first phase, the project concentrated upon two villages, the intention being that, following the piloting of the project in these two locations, it could be expanded to other women in other groups. Funding was provided by the Women in Development (WID) office of the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

The aims of the project relate to the Tanzanian Arusha Declaration of 1967 which detailed a policy for the whole country of socialism and self-reliance. In the declaration it was spelt out that 'Tanzania must become a country where all men and women are equal socially and economically, where there was an absence of exploitation of any form, where the major means of production would be under the control of the peasants and workers and where leaders on every level would be chosen democratically' (Nyerere, 1968:23-250).(1)

It was a commitment to decentralization, and to the participation of the people in the process of decentralization. In practice, this evolved into a model for 'dialogical communication', the goal of which was:

> "to stimulate critical, self-generated opinion messages from the populace so that messages would flow in two directions. The government, the people 'in control' were to become a responding as well as a directing body. The dichotomy between those who possess knowledge to 'extend' and those who 'do not know and must be taught' is thus eliminated. The emphasis of development was changed from one which concentrated on economic growth to one which centred on 'people participation' in all aspects of development."(2)

As in many countries, Tanzanian women had been left out of development programmes, despite the vital role they play in family and economic life. Dating from the Arusha Declaration, there was a growing awareness of the need to involve women, resulting in a crop of projects such as the setting up of women's co-operatives, and the efforts of the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) to organize weaving, pottery, leather and beadwork industries for women. In the previous section the Tanzanian Mass Radio Campaigns were described and in these women participated as trainers, as participants in radio programmes, as group leaders, and as evaluators. In the 'Man is Health' campaign, 52 per cent of the participants were women, and in the 'Food is Life' campaign, 54 per cent of the participants were women.(3) One outcome of the 'Food is Life' evaluation was the recommendation that small, local projects be set up to build upon the energy released by these campaigns and that these projects should concentrate upon the involvement and education of rural women. This was the context in which the Audio Cassette Listening Forums Project emerged.

Aims and Objectives

Apart from the generalized objectives mentioned above, the ACLF project had a clear set of aims relating to the subject matter, to the use of a particular technology and to the development of self-reliance in the women affected by the project. A rigorous programme of evaluation was built in, including formative evaluation (evaluation of each stage of the project which 'forms' or changes the shape and content of the project), and 'summative' evaluation, carried out at the end of the project. A clear project strategy was devised, which showed the relationship between the different 'inputs': media, group leaders, village women, training and evaluation. It was, in effect, the application of the 'systems' approach to development communication referred to in the first chapter of this book.(4) (Here, I can give only a relatively brief summary of the very comprehensive project document which was written by Joyce Stanley with Alisa Lundeen. Both were involved in setting up and carrying out work, with Martha Mollel. In the original text are more precise details of planning and implementation, along with examples of questionnaires administered as pre- and post-tests. (See Audio Cassette Listening Forums: A participatory women's development project by Joyce Stanley with Alisa Lundeen.)

> The overall aims were:
> to provide a development programme that enabled women to recognize the importance of their role and at the same time encourage implementation of self-determined action plans primarily related to health and nutrition.(5)

The project also set out to evaluate 'an action research project which involved the participants in planning, implementation and evaluation' and 'using small media - specifically audio cassettes - in a development education program'.(6)

Methodology

In line with the non-directive approach agreed by the project co-ordinators, an original methodology was followed. There were no pre-decided subjects prepared by the project co-ordinators. That is, although there had been a decision to use audio-cassettes and to work with groups, the content of the audio-cassettes was left for the women in the participating villages to determine.

The first step was for the project team to attend a meeting of the Tanzanian Women United group (UTW), to explain the project and to ask that group to select five group leaders who would work with the project in each village for one year. This procedure was followed in the two villages selected for the work, Kimundo and Majengo. Both of these are accessible from the project centre in Arusha and were known to the co-ordinators beforehand. In addition, two 'control' villages were chosen, with profiles similar to the participating villages', so that the effectiveness of the project could be monitored.

The five group leaders selected for each village were asked to fulfil precise duties. They were to attend a five day training seminar, to conduct the initial needs survey, to meet weekly to discuss the results of the survey and, from there, to draw up a list of subject priorities for their village. These subject priorities would then form the content of the audio-tapes. The group leaders were also to learn how to use the tape recorders and how to organize discussion groups, to help in forming action plans with the groups and to help in carrying out the action programme.

Content of the training programme covered group leadership, discussion skills, design of the needs survey and use of the tape recorders. But of more interest than the content was the

methodology. There was no attempt simply to 'pass on' information about these skills through direct teaching. The methodology used was that developed by Paulo Freire, and referred to in Chapter 1 of this book, the dialogue method. In this method, various codes are used to help participants focus upon their own situation, to discuss and analyse it, and to come to an awareness of their own ability to change or to modify that reality. For example, Freire used slides to show people in particular roles in relation to other people, or to the physical environment. Other 'codes' might be drawings or dramatized sequences played out by a group or recorded on video or audio tape. The problems thrown up by analysis of the 'codes' are posed by the group, not by the leader, and the ways of solving the problems are also suggested by the group, and argued through. In the Arusha group leaders' training programme these 'code' sessions were alternated with information sessions which were conducted by the co-ordinators when the group needed them. Using this approach of 'code' analysis, the group co-ordinators 'learn' from the group members about their needs and do not enter into the business of passing on information about preconceived problems.

Towards the end of the seminar during which two group evaluations of the training had taken place, the group leaders returned to their villages with the tape recorders and a supply of batteries, and set out to administer the needs survey they had drawn up during the week. At the same time, the ACLF co-ordinators surveyed village leaders, both so that the leaders could be aware of the project and responsive to it, and also so that the project could be reinforced with basic information from these leaders. Contacts were also made with local and district officials, aid projects and various bodies concerned with health and nutrition. The main purpose of this out-reach activity was to obtain more information for the project itself, but it was also an effective way of keeping local officials informed, so that they would not feel threatened by the work, and could give their support if it were needed.

Perhaps the most important part of this project was the needs survey carried out by the group leaders, for this was to determine the subject matter of the project. It took four weeks to complete. The group leaders went to meetings and recorded the discussions women had about their problems, noted comments women made in the village, remembered what they had heard and seen. Over the four weeks, this built up into a profile, on tape, of the main concerns of each village. The material gathered by the group leaders in their discussion with participants was compared with a questionnaire survey which the project co-ordinators administered. In the end, it was found that the group leaders' discussion method provided a much more accurate account of the priorities of concern, with much more 'flesh', than the bald, statistical data obtained by the questionnaire method. It also showed that non-specialists could carry out research effectively.

Out of the needs survey, a list of priorities was drawn up for each village. These were:

KIMUNDO	MAJENGO
1. Water; lack of pipelines	1. Lack of transport
2. Lack of/non-use of latrines	2. Drunkenness
3. Improper childcare and nutrition	3. Lack of proper health care facilities
4. Disrespect for adults	4. Lack of sufficient food and clothing for children
5. Loss of young people to the towns	

The first stage of the project had been completed. Although this stage had taken a considerable length of time, it seems that the group leaders and the village participants grew more enthusiastic as time went on. They were eager to begin the more intensive problem-solving stage, perhaps spurred on by the success of the problem-identification phase. So often participation by non-professionals starts out promisingly, then fades away, so that the bulk of the work is done by the full-time co-ordinators. Joyce Stanley comments: "By the third meeting the ACLF staff were passive observers, with the group leaders and the visiting group members controlling the entire meeting."(7)

The Action Programme

Audio-cassette tapes were prepared for use in the problem-solving and action groups. The tapes were of two types. The first posed problems, focusing on the priority topics identified in each village. The second were information tapes to be listened to after problem-solving discussions. The tapes were produced by several groups: a team of health workers from the district, the group leaders, health personnel, members of the project team, and a local songwriter. One of the 'code' formats used was the sociodrama, where participants developed and acted out problem-posing dramatizations relevant to the key topics. These were used as a focus for group discussions, and were devised by the group leaders.

Meanwhile, the group leaders organized their listening groups and then, using the taped codes as starting points for discussion, began the process of problem-solving. In the report of this project, the authors set out the list of questions which were put to each group after the audio tape had been played. These were:

1. What do you hear happening?
2. Why is this happening?
3. Does this happen in our situation?
4. What problems does this situation bring?
5. What can we do to solve this problem?
6. Who in the village can give us additional assistance?
7. What outside information do we need? (8)

At the end of each session, the small groups in each village worked out their own action plans and put these forward to the larger village group for further elaboration and the development of joint action strategies.

The action which followed in Kimundo included setting up demonstrations of latrine building methods, group training by a local nutritionist in child-care, creation of home gardens to increase and improve nutrition, planting citrus trees and raising chickens, knitting clothes for children. Tapes were produced on nutrition topics, and, in Kimundo, some of the women began producing banana fibre baskets for sale as a way of increasing their incomes.

In Majengo, energy was first focused on the problem of drunkenness, and several action plans were set in motion. One of these was to see that the law on illegal brewing was enforced, to make improvements to the women's own beer hall to tempt trade away from the illegal premises, and to build another beer hall in another part of the village so that all drinking could be brought under control. Meanwhile, a cholera outbreak alleviated the drunkenness problem, and inter-group differences led to the group dividing into two area action groups. The focus changed to income-producing activities. These included the setting up of a local shop to compete with the over-priced existing store, cultivating crops for sale, and sewing clothing for sale in the shop. A long term objective is for the women to save enough money to buy a Landrover, so that they deal with the problem of transport.

Evaluation

In the description of this project, more time than might seem necessary has been given to a description of the methodology. This is not only because the methodology is important, but because it is the project, that is, the subject matter itself is not generalizable. There may be a need in other countries for women's education and communication, but there the comparison ends. Needs are unlikely to be the same, therefore the subject matter of the media component will not be the same.

Another key factor in this project which perhaps distinguishes it from many others is the emphasis on creating self-reliance and independence, and on creating a sense of pride and confidence in the participants. One of the main purposes of the project was to establish a group method of working and the confidence to learn and change, which would continue once the project co-ordinators' involvement had ceased. In writing about the evaluation of the project, Joyce Stanley comments: "It is important to recognize that other development programs with less emphasis on the development of pride and self-awareness could possibly, through an injection of funds or constant direction and support, provide similar behavioral change results."(9) That is undoubtedly true, but where other projects have failed dismally is in leaving anything other than the tangible evidence behind. That is, latrines may have been constructed, but have they been used? Have rural people coped with other problems which have arisen or dealt with those which existed before the development project occurred? If development really is about equipping people to assess and deal with difficulties as they arise, then the methodology tried in this Tanzanian Audio Cassette Listening Forums Project seems pertinent.

Evaluation played an important part in the action of the project itself. Just as the methodology of implementation relied on participation, so the evaluation relied on participation. One of the criteria in drawing up the evaluation was that it should directly benefit the people involved in the project during the term of the project, as well as providing some measure, at the end of the day, of the physical changes which had been made: of the changes in attitude and self-awareness, of the dialogue methodology itself, and of the effectiveness of the audio-cassettes in this methodology.

Three main methods of evaluation were used. Pre- and post-tests were administered in both the participating villages and the control villages, covering questions such as the level of knowledge and awareness, the extent and degree of change which had occurred, the extent of participation, the extent of joint action among women to deal with perceived problems. The intention here was to provide an 'objective' measure of the ACLF's effectiveness in bringing about change. During the project, the control villages were given information, but they did not have the group leaders' training, nor the coding and information tapes.

A second method of evaluation was the structured observation of women's activities before, during and after the project and unstructured observations made throughout the project by the evaluator. There were also participant interviews. The group leaders contributed to the structured and unstructured observations alongside the project evaluator and co-ordinators, and, in the case of the interviews, they helped draw up the questions to be asked, conducted the interviews and had access to all of the feedback.

The third aspect of the evaluation was an evaluation seminar, in which the group leaders took part. Here again the dialogue and group discussion method was used, and the topic was first introduced through two code skits.

Results

Briefly, the project seems to have been successful in achieving most of its objectives. Changes were made, and could be observed. Evaluation of the qualitative objectives showed 'a significant increase in positive attitudes in the participating villages and none in the control villages'.(10) And, in weighing the results of the various evaluation

techniques used, the co-ordinators conclude: "Though none of the measures used provided a perfect proof of attitude change among the participants, the combination of all, plus the actions that were taken offer sufficient proof of the potential of the project methodology in increasing the participants' sustained self-awareness and pride."(11)

Perhaps the least clear outcome was the effectiveness of the audio-cassettes in stimulating the dialogue methodology. Here, there seemed to be a difference between the villages. In Kimundo, where there was already a core of women's action, the most valued tapes were those which provided information. In Majengo, on the other hand, where there had been a relatively apathetic atmosphere, the code tapes were more highly appreciated. A limitation of the audio-cassettes in their use for 'coding' was that the code should be the focus for discussion and analysis but, once the machinery is turned off for discussion, the code ceases to exist. For this reason, pictorial 'codes' were sometimes found to be more effective, as in the case of latrine improvement.

But the co-ordinators are sure of the value of audio-cassettes in those aspects which led them to select this medium. Audio-cassettes did make it possible for more people to be reached by specialist personnel. They did give control of the medium to the participants. They did make it possible for meetings to be recorded, and therefore provide feedback. They made it possible for information to be permanently available, as and when the groups needed it. They were ideal for work with non-literate groups, and they were produced on location, with the combined participation of experts and villagers. They were also a low cost medium, and were battery operated, so that they proved appropriate to the communication task and the physical situation.

The project co-ordinators report that the technology was especially valuable in stimulating interest initially, but that it did not sustain group activities. This is how it should be. There is a danger that, in introducing a new technology, dependency will be focused upon it, and that it could even begin to prevent or hold back mobilization. It also means that, once the technology disappears, as it is likely to do if it is specially imported for the period of the project and is expensive, so will the activity which surrounds it.

The Tanzanian Audio Cassette Listening Forum appears to be a good example of an appropriate methodology in an appropriate political setting. At the end of this chapter, there is some further discussion of the key principles of this project, when the possibilities for transfer to other country situations is discussed in the light of other, comparable experiences.

2. AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION CENTRE FOR TRAINING (CEPAC)

The CEPAC project in Peru is part of a larger project established by the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Centre of Training and Investigation for the Agrarian Reform System (CENCIRA). CEPAC is the communications wing of CENCIRA, an organization which is responsible for training rural people in improved methods of farming and agriculture.

Background and Context

The role of CENCIRA and its communications sector, CEPAC, has to be understood in the light of political changes which occurred in Peru in 1969. At that time, control of the country was taken by a military coup. The new government instituted land reforms intended to restore ownership of the land to the peasants or 'campesinos'. Up until that time, powerful landlords had owned most of the arable land, and had employed the 'campesinos' as labourers, or had left the land uncultivated. A major initiative of the Agrarian Reform System was to make the 'campesinos' co-operative proprietors of 30 per cent of the land.

Immediately there was a need to train the 'campesinos' in a number of areas. The first of these was production technology, such as land cultivation, animal husbandry, fertilization methods and so on. Secondly, there was a need to train the farmers in the rather special skills of co-operative management. And there was also a need to help these rural people improve their living conditions through increased food production, better nutrition, housing water supplies.

The CEPAC organization, which carries out training of rural people through audiovisual means, grew out of the CENCIRA project. It is financed by the United Nations Development Programme, and the Food and Agricultural Organization. Planning and development of the project have been carried out by outside experts, working with local counterparts. But, by 1980, it is intended that the project will be wholly run by Peruvians.

This project attempts to cope with problems which can be found in many other countries: the need to up-date rural technology; to train rural people to tackle the problems of agriculture in more appropriate, efficient ways. But the particular task is more of a purely educational one than simply up-dating technical skills. The 'campesinos' have been transformed from their traditional role of labourers working for an overseer to managers of their own resource. It is a problem peculiar to the changes brought about by the revolutionary land reforms. It has similarities with those countries in which most of the land is owned by small farmers, but the fact that, in Peru, these farmers are working together in co-operatives, rather than independently, poses special problems and demands sophisticated skills.

Media Methodology

The CEPAC project uses portable video to make and take its training programmes to the farmers and peasants. But the approach used is very tightly organized and noticeably different from the earlier uses of video mentioned in the previous chapter. In Peru, video is not so much used as a 'Catalyst' in the sense of recording people's views and using this recorded material to stimulate dialogue and mobilization. As will be seen later, there are elements of this dialectical method in the Peruvian application of video, but they are part of an overall strategy which is based upon purposeful training.

CEPAC produces training materials on video, using Sony reel and cartridge recorders. Producers are recruited to the civil service especially for this work, and they come from all walks of life. Some are 'campesinos', some are teachers, some are professional people. An early decision was that the 'producers' should be specially trained and recruited, rather than drawn from the broadcast industries. The work demands 'professionalism', but a professionalism which is different from that prevalent within broadcast institutions. As Manuel Calvelo Rios, the director of the video programme, describes it: 'We are not looking for shots that are "nice" but for shots that are "effective".' Media specialists seemed too concerned with the 'aesthetic' to adapt. So the future producer/extension workers are not specialists. They are not specialists in their backgrounds, and they are not trained to be 'specialist' in any particular aspect of media production but as 'all round' media producers and extension workers.

To date, ninety-four people have been trained in media production (i.e. video photography and accompanying print materials), in the educational and methodological aspects, and in the application of this work in the field. The first training phase, during which time the producers are based in the production training centre in Lima (or, more recently, in the regional production centres of which there are now three with another two in construction), lasts three to five months. Their schedule is intensive. They work twelve to fifteen hours each day, learning to handle educational television. At the end of that time, the training is transferred to the field, where the producers work for four to eight months. Here they work with the 'campesinos', sometimes working half a day alongside the peasants doing their everyday tasks, and teaching in the afternoons. At the end of that period, they will have produced usable media programmes which can be applied and evaluated.

At present, there are thirty extension personnel working full-time with CEPAC on production and application. Some of those trained have moved to better job offers, or been absorbed by the broadcast industries. Others do not do any audiovisual work.

Production

Production of the training courses (of which there are now twenty-six, made up of three hundred modules, each of which is taken as a class) is carried out on location. The stages are:

(i) Discussion and observation on location with the 'campesinos' to discover the needs and problems of the area.
(ii) Research into the subject to discover the range and type of content.
(iii) Follow-up research with the 'campesinos' to check the relevance of the proposed content, and to ensure that the level of the material is correct and that the suggested presentation is comprehensible.
(iv) Development and revision of the main ideas.
(v) Development and revision of the script.
(vi) Planning of production.
*(vii) Location recording.
(viii) Additional recording in the production centre studio, and preparation of graphics.
(ix) Production of the written materials.
(x) Editing of the video tape and reproduction of the print component.
(xi) Initial evaluation of the course.

Application

After production, the training modules are again taken back to the field. The same producers who worked on the production of the materials are the people who apply them, so that, unlike the 'distance teaching' approach which is the usual application for video materials, there is face-to-face communication with the target group, and programming can be modified where it does not suit local needs.

In three years of work since the CEPAC project started, about 20,000 'campesinos' have taken courses. Working with groups of fifteen to forty, the video modules are applied in the following way:

(i) The group registers for the course and completes a knowledge test.
(ii) The audiovisual material is shown, discussed and analysed.
(iii) There is dialogue between the group and the 'teacher', or between members of the group.
(iv) Members of the group work through the printed materials, which may be in a manual form, which the members of the group keep.
(v) Members of the group and the teacher(s) carry out practical work to confirm and consolidate the content of the course.

In the year 1979, the CEPAC project expects to be able to reach 40,000 'campesinos' in this way. This is on site, specially prepared material

*80 per cent of the programme material is recorded on location with the 'campesinos'.

to suit particular conditions, combining audiovisual media production involvement with participative learning. The cost is approximately two to five US dollars per 'campesino' course.

The Use of Video

Some disenchantment with the use of portable video for development purposes has occurred since the post 'Fogo process' heyday of the late sixties and early seventies. In some parts of the world, projects have begun using video and found that it did not stand up to the extreme weather conditions, particularly dryness and dust. And there were projects which found that a more direct method of presentation of ideas, such as drama, allowed for more participation and intervention by the target groups. In Peru, perhaps because of the way in which video has been used, neither of these factors has caused problems.

Servicing and maintenance of the equipment can be carried out in any of the production centres, but on-the-spot maintenance is guaranteed because of the training given to the producers. In this situation, despite the tremendous climatic variations in Peru, with its steamy jungles and swamps, coasts and plains, the project team consider that portable video has survived extremely well.

Using the methodology described earlier of involving the 'campesinos' in production and evaluation, and teaching through analysis and dialogue, there does not seem to be the problem of distancing experienced when using, for example, broadcast media. The 'classes' are so organized that there is plenty of room for discussion and clarification. Tapes can be replayed, or stopped, if elaboration is needed. The follow-up demonstration and practical experience of performing the skill is the final evidence of how successful the training session has been, and concretizes the theory. More and more, the training programmes are being produced in local languages other than Spanish, so that they are not in any way alien to the local situation, but rooted in it. The fact that video is portable means that extra material can be recorded with each group and added to a course, or substituted for sections of it. Often the discussions which video stimulates are recorded during the class, and form part of the tape for the next group.

In the previous example, a description of the use of 'codes' for teaching was given. In Peru, this approach is used for the less 'practical' sessions, although the dialogue process is always used rather than the 'transfer' of fact approach. Where topics such as co-operative management, relationships between members of the co-operative and methods of decision-making are being treated, the video materials pose and focus on the problems, so that members of the group work towards the solutions, rather than having a prescribed solution put before them. The same applies to those courses which deal with the communities' own efforts to improve living conditions. Manual Calvelo Rios describes this as the process of 'increasing people's skills to survive'.

Evaluation

A full evaluation of the Peruvian CEPAC project is being carried out during 1979; the results are not available at the time of writing. But there are clear indications that the programme CEPAC has been following is successful, and is valid in terms of the needs of the 'campesinos'. For example, co-operatives are able to ask the CEPAC teams to make special video materials for them, and to run courses on subjects where they themselves perceive a need. And, when they do this, as well as when they invite the CEPAC teams to visit their area, they make a payment for the work. Since the time that this service has been available, in addition to the regular CEPAC programme, there has been a flow of requests and, in December 1978, co-operatives had paid US$ 50,000 for the courses they had requested.

Evaluation is also carried out 'on-the-spot', as mentioned earlier. Each audiovisual course or module class includes a participative evaluation session, and modifications to the programming can be made there and then to extend, correct or add. Another indication of success is the level of participation itself. Up to the end of 1978, 20,000 'campesinos' had taken part in audiovisual courses. These are given on location, on the job. This requires that the farmer devote his own time to learning, when he could be earning.

A point of comparison with the Tanzanian Audio Cassette Listening Forums project is in the decision to work with groups rather than individuals. And here, as in the Tanzanian example, a 'small medium' is used as an alternative to broadcasting. The same advantages of flexibility, and of the group's ability to control the medium apply. Other methods of reaching rural people using electronic media have been used in the past and, in the previous chapter, the 'Campo y Productividad' project was described, in which programmes on national television were watched by 'telegroups'. But a disadvantage of broadcasting is the limitation on participation, a limitation from which the video and audio tape projects do not suffer.

There is no doubt that, if the Tanzanian or Peruvian models are attempted on any sort of large scale, there has to be a well planned, well co-ordinated and realistic training scheme, and both schemes draw heavily on manpower. However, both examples show that non-specialists can carry out this work extremely successfully, and that the technical and pedagogical skills can be acquired. One thing most developing countries are not short of is manpower, and it seems that if the media materials are to be truly tailor-made to their task there is no substitute for working with target groups in the ways shown by these two projects. The

problem in using broadcast radio or television is the lack of feedback. All kinds of schemes have been devised to make up for this face-to-face contact, as some of the examples selected here demonstrate. But there is still the problem of making sure that the programming touches the reality of the rural situation, and the variety of situations within a country. Where the programming is broadcast, there is the very real difficulty of meeting the needs of so many different individuals in different circumstances, all of whom have varying levels of need and levels of awareness.

However, there is the rare and perhaps a typical example of a special application of television technology, which is interesting in its own right and which illustrates a way in which television can reach out to particular groups. This is the example of Kheda TV in India.

3. KHEDA TV, AHMEDABAD, INDIA: SPACE APPLICATIONS CENTRE

Background and Context

Kheda TV is the only local television station in India. It developed, not as a plan nor as a first phase in a move towards local television, but as an offshoot of SITE, the programme of the Space Applications Centre in Ahmedabad. SITE had been set up to devise programming for rural peoples in India, using the satellite, and a team of researchers and producers came together to produce and pilot this material. With the backing of SITE, members of this team began to try out programming for a certain sector of the population in the area, and from this almost 'accidental' beginning has developed Kheda TV.

Kheda as a region is rich. There is a core of hardworking, progressive people working the main cash crop which is tobacco. At the same time, there are large sections of the community which are poor, depressed and underprivileged. These Harijans (the lowest caste Indians), landless labourers and small farmers, are at the bottom of the line in terms of power, of rights, of opportunity, of development.

Television sets are not owned by the poor, but there are sets in community centres in the small villages. In Kheda district there are ten 'taluka' or communes, and the transmission area of Kheda TV is to six of these, where there are a total of five hundred television sets. The idea is that sets are switched on for community viewing for the one hour of transmission from Kheda TV each day. This is not always the case, and the research team of Kheda TV estimate that approximately 60 per cent of the sets are switched on at any one time.(12) This means that something like 12,000 people watch the programming each day.

Programming

Half of the one hour's daily programming is produced by Doordarshan, the National Television network, and one half is provided by the SAC team. Doordarshan programming consists of news, current affairs and entertainment, while Space Applications Centre programming is made up of basic agriculture, animal husbandry and health, children's programming, general information, socio-economic subjects (including welfare rights) and entertainment. The largest proportion of Kheda TV time is given to the socio-economic area, and this accounts for some 43 per cent of output. In this area, subjects like untouchability, prohibition, superstition, minimum wages and exploitation are dealt with, whereas the basic information programmes on agriculture and farming give matter-of-fact information.

About 120 people watch television programming per set, and the daily audience is made up of approximately 5000 children, 5000 men and 2000 women. Because of the large size of the children's audience, some attention has been paid to the development of this area, and subjects like science and problem-solving are covered. Topics such as methods of increasing income through home industries are treated in the information sections, and there are regular sessions which deal with the answers to viewers' letters.

Philosophy

From the outset, the Kheda TV team decided to concentrate on a particular section of the potential audience. Programming can be received by the urban community, but the local nature of the transmission has been exploited specifically for the underprivileged groups. These are the Harijans, the landless labourers, the artisans, women and subsistence farmers. The decision to work primarily with these groups has met with some resistance from the more elite groups but, perhaps because of the experimental nature of the project and the support from the Space Applications Centre, the television group has been able to pursue its special target group policy up to the present time.

This programming policy did not emerge without a great deal of talk, discussion and review of experience within the SAC/Kheda TV team. It was an outcome of the day-to-day experience of working in the villages with local people, and the realization that if Kheda TV was to do anything different from mainstream television (which was already available), then it had to be radically different in approach, not just in content. Out of these deliberations about what the purpose and focus of programming should be there grew a 'credo': a set of beliefs, aims and objectives, which is the background against which all programming decisions are set. The 'credo' lays down who the audience is, what the special needs of that audience are, and the aims

of the programming which is devised for that audience. Extracts from that 'credo' inform an understanding of the Kheda team's methodology, and a consideration of the types of programme material which have emerged from it.

> Development ... implies a break from the status quo, from inertia; it implies movement, change. ... economic development cannot take place in isolation; it requires changes in the social system and in the attitude of the individual; it implies breaking away from bondages and oppression; and - most importantly - it necessitates an 'awakening' of the individual and his self-confidence.
>
> In trying to accelerate development, communication can play a very major role. Our attempt in Kheda will be to use TV - and also to supplement it by other means - for development in the broadcast meaning of the term. Concretely the attempt will be to:
>
> (i) Focus on the oppression and bondages in the present social and economic system in such a way as to heighten understanding;
>
> (ii) Mobilize the community and the individual himself to break away from these bondages;
>
> (iii) Promote self-reliance among the individual and the community:
>
> - involving a reduction in apathy, in dependence on God or others;
> - implying improvisation and an optimal use of local resources;
> - necessitating a co-operative spirit and a willingness to take risks.
>
> The prime target audience will invariably be the lower classes/castes who are the most oppressed and who need the catalytic input that will help them to help themselves ...(13)

Methodology

Production is carried out by teams. These teams include a producer, a researcher, a scriptwriter, and a content expert. All of these people work together, through discussion, to formulate and produce the programmes. Researchers carry out needs assessment research in local villages, but the fact that Kheda TV is located in the area for which the programming is designed means that producers are in almost daily contact with the audience. There is therefore no need for the traditional division between researchers and producers, with the researchers going out into the 'real' world and reporting their findings to the producers. Both have this contact with the target group, the evidence which directs the kind of programming produced. And the researchers do not confine themselves to 'evaluation' - the summary of what went well, what failed. Because they work all the time with the audience, they help inform programming discussions from the outset.

Production in the team mode follows a pattern. There is the discussion phase, when a producer puts before the rest of the team his ideas for a series. (It has been found that series have more impact than 'one-offs'.) Here, at the first discussion of the idea, possible programming is examined in the light of the 'credo': its objectives, the audience needs it is designed to fulfil, the appropriateness of the topic for the target group. Formative research feeds into these discussions from initial consideration of the idea. Often an outcome of this planning phase is that more research is needed into the specific subject matter. But basic information on which an assessment of a series proposal can be made is to hand because of the close and continuing involvement of the researchers with the community.

If further research is needed, this can be carried out in a number of ways and one of these is through portable video tape recording. Such visual evidence might be placed before the programming committee alone, but there are situations in which, for example, the production team is working with another agency. Here, the video 'evidence' would be used to inform discussions between the production team and the outside organization with which the production team wants to co-operate.

Programming discussion is followed by the development of the idea into scripts, and these are brought to the Script Committee. This is made up of the producer, the researcher and the writer. Following clarification of the script, some of the material is recorded on location, and about 15 per cent of programming is previewed. Again, writers, producers and researchers come together for these sessions, and, on the basis of them, further research or pre-testing may be decided; that is, if the group is not happy with the material which is emerging, or there are strong doubts about its appropriateness or comprehensibility, feedback can be obtained from the intended audience group, and modifications will be made on the basis of this feedback.

Many of the programmes are pre-tested in the field. Mostly these are programmes which are trying a new or unusual format, or those which are setting the style for a whole series. In the latter case, it is preferable to test the first or second programme in a series if it is hoped that a large following will build up for it. But format testing is also crucial. Although the Kheda TV producers and researchers are themselves Indian and not foreign 'experts', the gaps between their experience and education and those of their audience could lead to mistakes being made about the level of the material, the 'modes' used to convey it, the response which certain approaches might elicit, the sensitivities of the target group. For this reason, pre-testing is an important part of the production process, especially for those programmes which deal with socially oriented issues. Following transmission the researchers concentrate on obtaining feedback, through discussion with the audience, through video recording, through

observations during viewing, through viewers' letters and through content analysis.

Objectives

Given the framework of the Kheda operation and this brief outline of the working methods adopted, what is it that the producers, researchers and script writers are trying to do? The particular situation of the people who make up their target audience poses problems which are different from both the examples discussed previously in this chapter. That is, in the Tanzanian example, the audio-cassette project was being practised within a particular ideological context: one in which there was a commitment to the development of self-reliance and, in particular, to the involvement of women in that development process. The target group, village women, were working for themselves and for their families, so that any improvements they made in hygiene, nutrition, clothing standards and ability to increase their income benefited them directly. In this sense, members of the target group were free agents. No obstacles were put before them which they could not, by direct action, overcome, as they had the backing and the support of the national development programme. In fact, one example serves to highlight this. An objective of one of the participating groups was to open a communal shop with the intention of competing with the shop run by a village elder. After various difficulties had been placed in the way of the women by this elder, the group as a whole confronted him with the problem. After some debate and discussion they managed to obtain the leader's confidence and break the monopoly.

In Peru, the structural situation is similar. The rural land reforms instituted by the government brought about a need for a communication, education and training programme. Within the co-operative, people are managers of their own resources, and the direct purpose of the video programme is to help people optimize that resource. Again, though there may be local and regional difficulties, the project is working within a climate and a framework of reform of change. Development has brought about a certain amount of disruption from the traditional way of life but the people affected by it are more free than they were in the past. The opportunity for them to increase control over their environment exists, and the communication programme is designed to help them take that control.

The Kheda TV project is working without any such clear-cut political backing. There has been no ideological or structural change of a radical kind, although, of course, laws do exist to protect the weak and prevent injustices. Untouchability, for example, can no longer be used as a basis for discrimination. And there is a minimum wage for agricultural workers. The problem is that in practice nothing has occurred which has changed the balance of power, and a hierarchical system still operates. In other words, although laws exist which should bring about greater equality and greater opportunity, these are not generally enforced, and traditional relationships between those who have and those who have not continue.

This is the fact of the situation in which Kheda TV functions. In writing about the difficulty of putting the Kheda TV 'credo' into practice, Kiran Karnik comments:

> "Centuries of oppression have led many people to prefer the 'security' of serfdom to the risks of revolt.
>
> It is very well of Ibaruri to say that '... it is better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees ...' but is it correct for righteous producers (who have neither died on their feet nor lived on their knees) to convey this message?"

He then raises the problem of what information, what subject matter, what rights television can relay to people who cannot take control, for, in real terms, they are dependent upon others.

> "Introducing new agricultural practices via TV is good, and increases the yield but how many villagers own land? Better animal husbandry practices translate immediately into higher income, but how many villagers own cattle? A minimum Wages Act exists, but who will enforce it?"(14)

Given the limitations of this environment, Kheda TV teams have made certain decisions and developed some interesting modes of working. Basically it is accepted that simply to 'stir up' the community is a meaningless way of working, especially as the production teams are not those likely to suffer. That is, some way of moving forward has to be found which is of real and practical help to the community, but which does not place them in a worse position in relation to their superiors than beforehand. For example, there is little value in advocating strikes and boycotts in a situation in which labour has no power: there are many, many unemployed who would step into the breach. And, if one man says he will not work for anything less than the minimum wage, there are likely to be many who will do so, so that effectiveness is lost. The only way to achieve these rights is through the organization of labour itself to demand them.

For these and other reasons, concentration is on helping people to improve their own economic position, making them conscious of their rights, and making them conscious of their environment. This means helping people to develop opportunities for earning money: setting up home-based industries, demonstrating what can be done with local materials, showing how credit can be obtained from banks and co-operative sources, and teaching marketing. It means making programming which deals with subjects such as rights, conveying information about laws on subjects such as

untouchability and wages, working conditions, and in helping people improve their own environment through improved hygiene, nutrition, health programmes, mother and childcare. It means showing the environment, both physical and social, in which people live, engaging people in discussion of it, and stimulating them to improve it.

Achieving these ends requires an approach to production which is not confined to the 'transmission' mode. That is, a great deal of the material which is gathered is not intended, nor used, for broadcast programming. Sometimes video material will be shown back only to the group it concerns. In other cases, material recorded with one group will be shown to another, and used as the basis for discussion. In other instances, a video-recording of a problem and of villagers' complaints will be shown to the decision-makers as 'evidence', and the discussion with these decision-makers will be shown again to the villagers, as a record of the event and of the promises which have been made. Some 40 per cent of the programming material is recorded on video portapak in the villages. Feedback can be immediate, and discussion can take place on site. In the end, this material may not be used for programming, but will have fulfilled its purpose there and then.

Research is an important component in the non-transmission mode activity. It is used to help avoid a mismatch between needs and programme content, and to help devise formats which are both accessible and which create impact. For example, research showed that one of the least popular formats was the interview. As a result, many of the programmes dealing with factual subjects such as health have been dramatized and have built up a large following. On one occasion an attempt was made to highlight the paradoxes of a religious sect which preached simplicity and austerity but which allowed and encouraged followers to shower its priests with presents of fruit, flowers and jewels. A video-tape showing this decoration was made, accompanied by the voice-over of a poet-thinker criticizing religious pomp and ceremony. Unfortunately, local people did not perceive the irony and thought the programme was propaganda for the sect. Because they did not know the verses, they did not hear them and did not realize the connection even when the audio tape was played without vision. Research into this problem reinforced the need for information about the comprehensibility of formats, and the need to know the level of the target audience.

On the positive side, less use is being made of the documentary approach in programming which deals with socio-economic problems than of drama and folk forms. It was found that asking people to appear in programmes which contained criticism of the establishment and local power groups aroused anger and threats of violence towards the participants. It did nothing to help them achieve better conditions but could make their circumstances worse. This became apparent after a programme which criticized the treatment of Harijans in which Harijans appeared. Later villagers refused to speak to the production team for fear of violence from the threats they had received.

In an attempt to 'side-step' this very real problem, the Kheda team has developed the genre of the 'false illusion'. This involves video tape recording the actual, real-life situation up to the point where it is 'safe', then using media other than video documentary to present the rest of the story. The idea is that what is shown is reality, but it is presented as illusion or fiction. In this method, the false /reality is presented through drama, puppets, satirical skits and traditional folk forms. One example was a series of programmes for Harijans featuring a man and a donkey-ego and alter ego. The donkey put questions to the man about the conditions under which Harijans live, and the man tried to answer. According to the Kheda team, this approach works well:

> "The extensive ... use of folk-forms to convey developmental messages and to arouse the apathetic rural poor, and the creation of the genre of false illusion are probably two of the most significant original contributions of (SAC) to Indian TV."(15)

Originality is possible within the Kheda system because of the equality between members of staff, and because of the freedom to experiment which the project allows. There are no rigid production formulae to be followed and producers are encouraged to find ways of extending TV as a medium for development. An example of this was the occasion when Kheda TV invited local people to send in plays. About sixty scripts were received, and many of these have been produced and transmitted. So the Kheda TV project, working within a very confined local political situation (that is, the hierarchical nature of rural India), has had to find ways of working around a difficult set of problems and of working within a socio-political structure which has not much changed for centuries. Rather than a policy of confrontation, they have pursued what the group describes as 'planned brinkmanship'. This means working on the problems that exist, taking them as far as they can be taken, then switching to another mode when they strike a particularly dangerous or sensitive area. They have not asked individuals to 'stand up and be counted' when to do so would be irresponsible. They have not avoided contentious subject matter either, but have developed formats in which this subject matter can be treated without incriminating the individual. They have tried to sharpen political awareness, and to make people aware of their rights through information; they have tried to work with 'good practice' by showing just treatment of the underprivileged and to work on the conscience of others through example. They have tried to create some dialogue between those

who rule through the bureaucracies and those who are affected by this rule.

S.R. Joshi, head of the research team working in Kheda, describes the process as "activating opportunities; giving people alternatives of behaviour, of practice, of ways of thinking; taking the message to the decision-makers to try to bring about real change; avoiding alienating the infrastructure."(16)

4. COMPARABILITY

The three examples chosen here show a media methodology being applied in varying circumstances, each operating within particular constraints and with differences of scale, of objective, of approach. There are some apparent similarities between the contexts of the Peruvian and Tanzanian examples, and this context differs noticeably from the Indian situation. But the Peruvian project starts out from a clear and well-defined objective of training people in agricultural and production skills, whereas in the Tanzanian study there was no such clear-cut aim. One of the purposes of the Arusha project was to discover what needs existed and to evolve a methodology which would enable people to discern and solve their problems without outside intervention. In Peru it is hoped that the CEPAC audiovisual programme will continue as long as the need continues, and the teams of audiovisually trained extension workers are permanently recruited for that purpose.

However, the overall aims of the Indian project are not different in kind from the other two projects. The political context, the lack of clear structural change, means that the approach to the realization of these aims is modified. Despite these differences, there are certain parallels in the situations of the 'campesinos', the Tanzanian women, and the depressed poor of Kheda district. That is, they are a group of people who have 'missed out' on the benefits of development. They are locked into a traditional relationship with their socio-political environment which prevents their advancement. They feel depressed and oppressed, and apathy prevents them taking opportunities even when they exist. But what makes the situation of the Indian poor so very different from their Peruvian and Tanzanian counterparts is the lack of any real structural alteration to create the 'space' in which they can press forward to change that relationship.

It is the limitation on space which restricts most development projects. In this sense, the Peruvian and Tanzanian examples are exceptional. In most countries up to the present time, development projects have little to do with developing people, and concentrate on developing things. That is, the emphasis is upon telling peasants and farmers that to use a particular fertilizer or to cultivate land in a certain way would increase production, rather than to find out what it is the farmer or the peasant needs to know so that he can increase productivity for his own family and his own community. The Peruvian and Tanzanian approach is to start from where the people are, and help them to optimize their own resources, rather than simply to try to persuade them to participate in a national, and often incomprehensible, programme.

But just as the Indian project has had to curtail its objectives to suit the realities of the situation, and to work within the limitations of the system, trying to find space, so must the Peruvians. The CEPAC project works to a specific brief. Its defined task is to train 'campesinos' to increase their productivity. In this sense, the medium of video is not a revolutionary tool. It is not being used to 'stir' people against the regime, or to highlight the injustices which have led to the exploitation of the poor. It is not being used to highlight the inconsistancies between the theory and the practice of government. It is not being used to provoke confrontation between those who govern and the governed. It is not even being used to mirror the inequalities which exist, as they do in most countries. Video and community media methodology are being applied to the task of helping the peasant to help himself. In the long run, this may be revolutionary for, if it continues to be successful, it may change the balance of power. But it will work within the confines of reality, not through direct politicization. Like the Indian example, CEPAC concentrates on expanding the political space, a policy which, in Kheda, is defined as a policy of 'planned brinkmanship'.

None of the three examples chosen here are offered as models. None of them could be transferred as a whole from one country to another. But there are elements in each of them that bear consideration when a community media programme is planned.

(a) Target Groups

In the first place, each of the projects selected a target audience. In no case has the project been directed at the community as a whole, or even at whole communities. The obvious advantage of this type of selectivity is that the needs of a particular group can be concentrated upon. Too much diversification makes it difficult to focus on details of concern. The project could become too generalized.

(b) Close Relationship between Media and Target Groups

Each project set about establishing a close and continuing relationship with the target group, and this relationship modifies the project itself. A part of this relationship is identification of group needs. The Peruvian project started from the idea of training farmers in production technology, but, even here, the actual content of the training is worked out with the groups. In Tanzania, it was

accepted that there was a need for women to become involved in development, but the women decided which areas they needed to explore, the topics they wished to cover. In Kheda, researchers and producers develop a strong relationship with the community so that they understand these needs.

(c) Group Participation in Media Development

In Kheda, in Arusha and in Peru, the content of programming is worked out in the field, monitored in the field throughout to test the level of comprehensibility and the impact of the communication. In all situations, members of the target group modify the formats of the media programming and, in most cases, local people participate in the programming itself. Apart from the formal feedback and evaluation processes, planners and producers are present when the programming is listened to or viewed, so that there is no distancing effect. People hear and see themselves and their neighbours speaking in their own languages and they know whether what they see and hear is 'true'. Because the producers are present, they constantly test the credibility of the medium and the pertinence of the communication.

(d) Use of Small Media

All of these projects use 'small media'. In Peru, this is portable video. In Kheda, portable video is used for recording and television is the transmission medium. In Arusha, the medium is audio tape. One advantage of small media for this type of development work is the relative cheapness. Another is flexibility. In each of the three situations, the playback possibilities of the media are exploited for instant feedback or in order to incorporate group views in the programming or as a means of communication between groups. Use of small media directly in this way, without transmission, is a precise and personal use of media with which broadcasting can never compete. It means that there are no established and permanent programme 'packages' which are brought out of the cupboard to solve problems, but each one is special to the group because it can be added to or substracted from.

(e) Participative Communication/Education

In none of the projects is there a traditional teacher/learner division. All use, in one form or another, a dialogical form of communication rather than the 'transfer of information' approach. In the three examples chosen here, media programming employs 'codes' to focus group discussion for at least some aspects of the work. In Tanzania, this is the sociodrama, in Kheda the 'false illusion'. In none of the projects is information simply presented without the opportunity for further interrogation by the target group. In Kheda this is included in pre-testing and on-the-spot discussion following video-recording, and research ensures that feedback informs future production. In Peru and Tanzania this dialogue is written into the application of the media materials from the start.

(f) Action Orientation

Both the Arusha and Peruvian examples are designed to produce changes in behaviour, and in these examples these changes are observable. In Kheda, the action orientation is less apparent for the reasons explained. But the aim is there. The intention is that the various uses of communication media, in the non-transmission mode as well as the transmission mode, should change practice.

(g) Develop Self-confidence of Self-respect

All of the projects set out to develop the individual and to help him to realize the opportunities which exist to improve the quality of life. This is not confined to material gains, but extends to changing attitudes of apathy and dependency to optimism and resourcefulness. The CEPAC approach to this is through arming the 'campesino' with the knowledge, skill and analytical tools to enable him to do this. In Arusha, it is through developing a method of identifying and solving problems which women can use in the present and the future. In Kheda, it is through demonstrating the inequalities and inconsistencies which exist in the socio-political sphere, and through using 'codes' to trigger discussion and strengthen the will to change.

(h) Communication Training

There is nothing haphazard about the approach to the problems any of the projects are trying to overcome. In Peru, perhaps the most large-scale training programme of its kind is under way. The specially recruited producer/extension worker passes through a long and intensive period of theoretical and practical training in media production and pedagogy. This course is constantly being modified to enable the producers to meet the demands of their task more adequately, and it is already a training which is different from most other educational media training. The training itself is constantly under scrutiny, and a great deal of time and money has been invested in it. Yet, without this highly developed core of personnel, the project would be ineffective. In Arusha, although the project is on a much smaller scale, there is the same emphasis on training. The group leaders' course was a key component in the success of the project. If this scheme were to be extended to other villages, group leader training would represent a major investment. This is because, although the group leaders are not specialists, the techniques they use are specialist and trainers would have to be found to train these group leaders. In Kheda, the 'team mode' has been adopted for production and

implementation. The production/research teams are highly specialized, but they have developed their own specialisms appropriate to their new role. That is, it would not be enough to transplant traditional media producers into such a situation and expect them to work in this way immediately. New skills have to be learnt and practised, and these take time to acquire.

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Chapter IV

An Appropriate Methodology for Development

1. THE MOOD AT PRESENT

The projects selected for discussion in Chapter 3 of this book illustrate a relatively structured application of the community media methodology. They are fairly confined in purpose. They are well planned and tightly disciplined from the organizational point of view, and they have a practical orientation. Some mention of a 'narrowing down' was made in the consideration of portable video as an appropriate medium for development work and perhaps the parameters of these projects contrast most sharply with the broad and radical propositions implied in the definitions of 'Access, Participation and Self-Management' outlined in the first section. Where does the practice of community communications fit in with the Belgrade criteria of democratized, participative communications systems?

Definitions such as those agreed in Belgrade are valuable, for they do conceptualize and bring together a whole range of meanings. They also work in part to focus thinking. In another way they are the picture of the 'ideal' against which progress can be measured. But, in a discussion of development communication, they stand more as the ideal for the development of communications than as the yardstick against which the use of communications media to further development can be measured. We have seen how these developments in communications theory have paralleled changing understandings of development itself and how these two evolutions have led to a new approach to development communication. The application of the community media methodology is one aspect of this change, but it is not intended to represent the total implementation of 'access and participation' principles.

However, there are communications theorists and community media advocates who feel that there has been too much compromise with these principles, especially in the developing world. They feel that the flavour of radicalism has been lost, and that the projects included in this discussion are too far from the ideal to be acceptable. In the earliest days of the 'small media' revolution (or the alternative media revolution), it was hoped that tools like portable video would have the power to mobilize and organize whole communities to achieve political goals. It was a much less tightly conceived objective; it had global implications for changing the balance of power.

Experience showed that some media, particularly video, did have tremendous power to stimulate group action, to 'politicize', and to mobilize. But the problem appeared to be that of sustaining the energy once it had been aroused, of avoiding dependency upon and fascination with the new medium itself. More practically, it gave people the enthusiasm for the revolution, without the strength and skill to achieve it. To change people takes time. It is valid to remove apathy and stimulate self-confidence, and this media can sometimes do. But to achieve real change, people have to change. And the way they change is through acquiring new knowledge, new skills, a new sense of achievement. These inputs do make a difference and do allow people to improve the quality of their lives materially and socially.

There are other limitations to the pure 'politicization' application of community communications. This is the power of politics. Without economic strength and organizational ability, underprivileged groups are in a poor position to usurp the political and social elite who hold the reins of power. Creating the enthusiasm for this direct approach through focusing on injustices, highlighting oppressions and inadequacies without the means to bring about change causes a build-up of frustration or, worse, a realization of the hopelessness of the situation and therefore a return to brooding apathy. In some instances, community media projects which promised to rouse rebellion have been simply terminated by those in power. On other occasions, they have gone further: the rebellion has been lost, along with jobs, housing, and even lives. In most cases, it is the underprivileged community which suffers the repercussions, not the community media 'animators'.

In raising the question of the 'direct

politicization' approach versus the more confined 'training' approach to community communications, there is no intention to imply that community media should abandon their political ends. It is not intended to advocate a rejection of the fundamental axioms of access and participation: democracy, freedom of expression, equality in utilization of the communications resource. But there does need to be an awareness of the implications of pursuing one approach rather than another. On the one hand, there is doubt as to whether community media can actually do more than provoke confrontation when they concentrate so directly upon political objectives. There is no evidence to show that they can achieve the wider aims. On the other hand, just as it is in those countries where there is most oppression that this approach is most likely to be tried, so will such attempts be most closely scrutinized, and have least chance of success.

There is a difference here between conditions in the industrialized countries and less developed countries. In most Western industrialized countries, community development projects concentrate on those sections of the community which are 'out of step' with the rate or level of development which the majority have achieved. These groups can be ethnic or immigrant communities, the unemployed, the aged, or single parent families. They can be localized groups, perhaps part of a large city, or communities united by their economic or social deprivation, and therefore spread across the country. Development here is concerned with bringing these groups up to the same level as the rest of the population. In some cases, this means urging people to organize to press for rights, or campaigning to make them aware of their entitlements and to take advantage of them.

Another approach is to publicize the 'gaps' between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', and to use political means to bring about changes in the law which will benefit the deprived. Straightforward programmes can be run to improve housing, education and standard of living for these groups through raising government and voluntary funds. In this situation, in which the target groups are minorities, politicization is an appropriate approach because the problem is to bring about a more equable distribution of that development which has already been achieved and from which most people already benefit. In fact, this kind of movement is concerned with giving people access to rights which already exist but from which, through circumstance, minorities are excluded. In this sense, politicization or conscientization is the process of using the political 'space' which was referred to in the previous chapter. And, because the political environment is one in which certain equalities have been agreed, there are unlikely to be political repercussions towards those who highlight instances where the achievement of equality is falling short. There may be, of course, conflict about the ways in which the balance can be restored, and whose responsibility it is to restore it. But this is a problem of a different order.

Politicization through the use of community media, then, is appropriate in those countries where a high level of development has been achieved and where political action to spread this development is tolerated. But in most developing countries deprivation is on a much larger scale. It is often rooted in traditions which have yet to be challenged, and the implications of redistribution of the benefits of development are that there is likely to be a reduction in economic and social position for those currently in power in favour of the disadvantaged majority. That is, because there are only pockets of development, it is most unlikely that these could be spread. And, if they were, they would be spread so thinly as to make little impression upon the needs of the majority. In doing so, those who now have the advantage might lose it, yet it would still make little difference to the mass of the people. This is the opposite of the developed country's concern with 'pockets' of underdevelopment.

Because the problems of deprivation are on such a large scale in developing countries, there is likely to be uneasiness about any process which has overt political ends and which might lead to revolutionary action. But this is different from saying that people should not have information about the law, about rights, about opportunities, and that they should not be helped to take advantage of these freedoms and justices. It does mean that care has to be taken to find ways of helping people to optimize their own resources and to place themselves in a better position socially and economically, and to work towards raising standards generally rather than to foster the growth of frustration and inappropriate confrontation.

Awareness of the problems and uncertainties of politicization have brought about this changing emphasis in community communications, from a political to a practical orientation. And the experience of the Tanzanian, Peruvian and Indian projects reinforces the view that people do respond to a practical, action-oriented approach. In Kheda, there has been some surprise from the production and research teams at the popularity of the 'hardcore' information aspects of programming, once appropriate means of conveying this information had been found. In Arusha, the kind of priorities which the village women drew up in a free situation demonstrate that there was no natural tendency to focus upon political imbalances, but to work towards improving the immediate environment. The popularity of the CEPAC education and training project is evidence that these rural people appreciate the opportunity to learn new skills, and to concentrate on raising the level of life locally. It does not mean, necessarily, that they are unaware of the way in which the political structure affects them, but they do seem able to work towards achieving what is achievable with local resources.

2. INFORMATIONAL INPUT

Perhaps one of the side-effects of the recent concern with community media as a tool for politicization has been to devalue the importance of access to information. Rightly, the community media methodology has highlighted the inadequacy of top-down information 'transfer', and demonstrated that ordinary people can participate in communication and education programmes. They have shown that involvement in these processes is, of itself, educative, and that information gained through a process of dialogue has more meaning and creates more impact than does traditional top-down information flow. At the same time, 'hardcore' information is necessary if change is to occur. Without it, motivation for change may not exist, and the skills to bring about change cannot be acquired. One of the characteristics of the underdeveloped community is isolation, both physical and social. This isolation is one of the problems which mass communication systems hoped to tackle. But, as we have seen, the limitations are that these systems have to cater for widely differing needs, and often fall short because the content of their communications is irrelevant. They also fall short because they are incapable of interaction, so that their educative role is limited. It was from these limitations that the interest in community communications evolved. But, in swinging away from the emphasis on information transfer, sometimes the informational input was lost. What present day community communicationists are concerned with is a reassessment of this information input, and evolving ways of bringing back the informational side of communications to fill out the community media package.

Undoubtedly, one of the most obvious lacks in developing communities is the lack of the means to communicate, the technology of communication. Local newspapers are not common and, where they are, their impact is limited by illiteracy. Television, as we have seen, is rarely found in rural areas and is even more rarely seen as a participatory form. There are some examples of rural radio but, considering the low cost of this medium, its relatively simple technology and its potential as a local, interactive medium, radio has hardly been harnessed as yet to become the communications medium of the people. Radio as a medium for development is again becoming popular in the literature, but the setting up of low-range, community stations in rural areas has not followed the enthusiasm. There are a few examples of this development but not yet a proliferation, which is in contrast to the pattern in the developed world where there has been a marked revival of community radio.

The absence of rural radio (that is, small-scale, community-access radio) is a good example of the poverty of communications infrastructures in underdeveloped countries. Moving away from group media, a point for consideration is the absence of the most personal of two-way communications media, the telephone. At present, 80 per cent of the world's telephones are in North America and Europe, where the total population is 759 million. In the Third World, where there is a population of 7 billion, only 7 per cent of the total number of telephones are found.(1) This is relevant if we consider that there are no alternative technologies to compensate for this imbalance, such as newspapers, radio or television.

In an article entitled 'The Role of Telecommunications in Socio-Economic Development',(2) Heather Hudson argues that the absence of the telephone as a vehicle for two-way communications between people has contributed to the poverty of life in developing areas. She examines the reasons for the low priority given to this medium by national and international agencies. One of these is that telecommunications have been seen as a privilege and a self-financing industry, a benefit which is generally available only to the urban elite. Telecommunications are not seen as a service commodity. And the reason that this luxury has remained a luxury, available only to those who can afford to pay for it, is that planners appear to be unconvinced of its value as a development tool. To demonstrate this, Hudson reveals that by December 1976 only 1.6 per cent of Inter-American Development Bank's budget was for telecommunications projects.(3)

Yet telecommunications links between places and people remain the most personal, the most immediate and flexible means of interactive communication. If a community has no possibility of communication with the outside world, with sources of information, advice, of services and commodities, and with those who govern, it seems obvious that there is little that community can do to improve itself. It is dependent upon these resources coming to it. Unfortunately, this is a rare occurrence.

Hudson illustrates the value of telecommunications for socio-economic development through a discussion of the impact of the ATS-1 audio-only satellite in Alaska. The project was started in 1971, with twenty-five ground stations with receiver/transmitters located in community halls or the homes of health aides. These stations were operated by the local health aides, members of the community who had received basic medical training. For the first time, communication was possible between the health aides and the Public Health Service community health clinics and doctors. Using ATS-1, a community health aide could communicate with physicians, while other aides listened in. During 1971, the number of patients treated with a doctor's advice more than tripled.(4) Alongside the health programme, ATS-1 developed an education and administration programme for schools. Where formerly crises such as generator failure, furnace blow-outs and lack of materials could bring schools to a close while help

was awaited, immediate communication helped keep the system working efficiently throughout the winter months.

Access to markets, shortages in raw materials, consumer demand, can all be monitored via telephone or radio links. The extent to which any community can react and relate to the broader economic world is limited by the efficacy of communications links between the community and that world. And there are not only social service and economic benefits. Hudson suggests that communication links between urban and rural areas may help cut down rural migration, through overcoming personal isolation, and by bringing rural communities within the range of business and government services. Finally, it is argued (based on research into the social, economic, educational and social service delivery inputs of telecommunications) that 'telecommunications infrastructure plus a complementary social infrastructure (e.g. rural development programmes or entrepreneurial activity) will together lead to a more economic growth and a more effective social service delivery than when either or both of the two basic conditions are absent'.(5)

There is no doubt that the poverty of communications technology does result in poverty of information, and that it also contributes to that sense of 'aloneness', of feeling that the rest of the world has passed by certain communities, for these communities lack the wherewithal to participate. So community communications have to address themselves to both the problem of creating self-awareness, of boosting morale, of 'conscientization', and to the problem of giving access to information to those who need it. Hudson writes: "Development may be seen as an awareness-action process in which access to information is critical to enable people to understand problems, evaluate alternatives, plan and act. Traditionally, the mass media have been considered the main purveyors of information, and little attention has been paid to telecommunications." She cites Cherry(6) who describes telecommunications media (telephone, telex, telegrams) as organizational media in contrast with the 'informational' mass media, and comments: "We should not expect that people will spontaneously begin to use the telephone to gather information or to form organizational linkages. However, we can hypothesize that the telephone will be used for organizational and informational purposes within the existing institutional framework of the society."

3. BRIDGING THE GAP

So far in this study the projects which have been quoted concentrate on extending opportunities for development through importing ideas and expertise to the communities. This is true not only of the very localized audio-cassette and video projects described, but also of the radio school type of approach, and the television teleclubs, which all require people to be organized around the media. The limitations of some of the projects are their short life and the fact that they rely on the projects coming to the communities. They do not all allow the community to reach out from that underdeveloped setting to the wider world, and to make an impact upon it. It is true that some video and audio projects have tried to extend out from horizontal communication between the members of one community to other communities and to decision-makers. But this has been a fairly limited aspect of the work, and an aspect which is likely to be secondary for some time to come, simply because the transmission range of the technology is limited, as is access to the mainstream communications system. An advantage of the telephone and of satellite ground stations or short-wave radio is that they reach out. And it is the community which can take the initiative and which can continue this relationship, without being dependent upon the vicariousness of 'pilot' projects.

This is not an 'either/or' argument between group media (such as video, audio-cassettes, theatre, puppetry and other folk forms) and telecommunications media. The example of the telephone has been chosen to illustrate recent thinking about the value of methods of communication which enable the community to 'reach out', to inform itself in a continuing way, and to organize its social and economic life for itself. And the best of both worlds is where group media are linked with access to information sources, and to transmission systems, and where both are at the service of the community.

In fact, it may be that group media have priority initially in allowing people to reach that point where they can organize, where they can articulate needs forcefully, and where they are aware of the goals that they can achieve, and where the achievement of these goals will lead them. But, at a certain stage, which will be reached by some sectors of the community more quickly than others, people will want to achieve different, and sometimes separate, ends. They will also want to pursue these goals to varying levels. For example, specialists such as health workers and educationists will have needs which differ from those of farmers or housewives; community action groups will have different goals from agriculturalists. Each of these groups requires information, requires answers, requires to work with wider groups, so that efforts can be co-ordinated. At this level, another approach to community communications is required.

A problem which has bedevilled community media workers is where to go beyond mobilization. Another related problem is how to sustain enthusiasms once the tangible objectives of community media initiatives have been achieved. Admittedly, these problems relate most specifically to the earlier days of community media work, when media, particularly video, were used to create horizontal communications, and are less crucial in the kind

of project which has been examined here, where the objectives are much more long term. But these problems continue to exist. What we might say is that much more is now known about where group media approaches can succeed, and where there is a need to develop methodologies which the community can use to go beyond this stage of development.

The answer to this problem must lie in the creation of opportunities for the community itself to move out into the broader world. That is, for there to be a range of routes which groups and individuals can pursue. These routes or channels must be two-way, they must be controlled by the community, and they must continue to be accessible. If we consider that the purposes of most group media projects are to stimulate and activate, and to provide the know-how for action, then opportunities for that know-how and that action to be extended and deepened have to exist.

Improved telecommunications could provide part of the answer, and in some countries, steps are now being taken to strengthen these systems. In Alaska there is now a network of 120 satellite ground stations which provide open channel communications to every permanent community of twenty-five or more. In India there are plans to install public telephones in villages of 2,500 or more, and in district and sub-district headquarters, with priority in underprivileged areas. In Kenya and Tanzania there are plans to extend postal and telephone services to all villages and in several Latin American countries (Colombia, Ecuador and Costa Rica) development plans include the installation of public telephones in rural areas and additional exchange systems.(7)

The relationship between group media and broader transmission systems, especially the telephone and radio, is not peripheral. At the simplest level, a community group which has defined its goals can use the telephone to make contact with decision-makers, and this exchange can enrich the content of the group media experience. By linking group media activities with local radio, there can be a platform for wider discussion and the stimulation of other people to participate in on-going activities, even if these have not been touched directly by group media projects. Programming from local radio and television can find an entry into regional broadcasting channels, when issues have reached a certain point where this level of communication is necessary. And, because of the way in which societies are organized, this level of communication is more likely to make an impact on the powers that be.

In countries where there is already a proliferation of media technology, such as group media, local radio and television, regional radio and television and national systems, telecommunications play a vital part in linking all these systems together, and in broadening out the range of communication. Local radio and the telephone are two technologies which are used hand in hand in most industrialized countries, and the telephone input into the programming content of local radio (for example, in the United Kingdom and the United States) is considerable. The telephone is the means through which community groups communicate with the wider community, and it is the means through which individuals make their voices heard to other inhabitants in that community. The telephone is used for news-gathering, for discussion programmes, for contact with decision-makers, to contact opinion leaders, to obtain advice from specialists, and to solicit the views of the 'man in the street'. Although sometimes the 'phone-in' programme (in which ordinary people comment on a subject or simply raise points for discussion) is sometimes used as a programming 'gimmick', it seems that there is some values in these programmes. A recent study of a morning 'phone-in' on one of the local BBC stations in the United Kingdom showed that people who telephoned for information did in fact act upon that information, and did feel that the information they received was more 'action-oriented' than that available from other sources. Of course, it would be foolish to argue that developing countries should have these means of communication, for the reality is that the cost of installing these systems is enormous, and takes time. But the point is that there are needs beyond group media and these are needs which the use of group media will concretize. We have come a long way from thinking that mass communications systems were the answer to development problems, and enough has been said about their limitations. Community communications have now proved that they can make a powerful contribution to personal and group development, and can help bring the community to self-awareness, and to new levels of skill and understanding. At the same time, if the wider aims of access and participation are to be achieved, there have to be means of participation in the total communications profile. The links between the mass and group media have to be forged. Realistically, local radio is the communication form which can best provide this link, the entry point to participation in the broader political and social life of the region and, ultimately, the country. (Although local radio is highlighted here, local television can also be valuable, but it has limitations in terms of cost and technical complexity. Also, low-range radio transmission is at present more easily developed than low-powered television transmission.) What is envisaged is local radio becoming the link between a number of group media projects. These group media projects would use a variety of media - video, cassettes, drama, folk media - and these would feed into local radio, with the telephone sometimes providing the means.

At the same time, intermediate community media forms, such as local radio and television, are limited without group media. Group media work intensively. They work with limited numbers

of people. Often they concentrate attention on particular issues. They stimulate people directly, and enable self-growth and learning in a way which intermediate communications forms cannot. It is group media which lead to the need for intermediate media and which enrich them. It is a continuing relationship. It is not as though, once intermediate media begin, group media end. The intention is that the existence of local radio or television will stimulate new group media activities, will highlight new areas where grass-roots activity is required, and will be ready to respond to those people who have recently been involved with group media for the first time. The partnership should be one of continual reinforcement, reaching deeper into community life, yet broadening out from it.

Ideally, a community media project would contain the two strands: access to group media and access to intermediate media. This means that group media are used in both a 'transmission mode' and a 'non-transmission mode', to quote the terms used by the Kheda TV teams. Material and ideas from group media projects would feed into local radio and television (or even regional stations), when appropriate. But the prime task of the group media projects should not be to provide material for broadcast, but to carry out detailed interactive processes. Too often, when groups are set up to respond and even contribute to broadcast transmissions, these transmissions become the prime objective of the groups, almost the reason for their existence. The example set by Kheda TV is a better model and one which could be further expanded if more manpower could be found to work primarily in the non-transmission mode. In most of the projects described in this study, one part of the story is missing. Either there are group media projects without links into any kind of informational or transmission system, or there are transmission systems which dominate the activities on the ground. More work has to be done to establish schemes which have links in both directions, where one is not overshadowed by the other, but where the relationships are more symbiotic.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

Following the rather broad discussion of these pages, an attempt to set out a possible procedure for the development of community media projects is outlined below. Of course, there are many gaps, and some more will be said about the need for research, finally, in this chapter. Practitioners working with particular projects will no doubt have more to add, but the ideas which are set out below are those which have emerged from contact with a wide range of projects and apply, to a varied extent, to all of them. The emphasis is on group media rather than regional transmission systems because, as explained previously, development is seen here as a problem of personal growth, and the best ways to tackle this problem are those which start with the individual in his/her locality, then lead outwards from that locality.

(i) Need Identification

This is the first step. It can be tackled broadly, as in the Kheda project, where the decision was taken to work with a particular section of the community, then as research indicated, to focus on the problems of that community in relation to the rest of society. Or, as with the CEPAC project, a decision was taken to concentrate on training in a particular area (agricultural skills, co-operative management, etc.) with a particular section of the community. Need identification here means finding out where the skills are lacking, which skills are lacking, what it is the farmers want to know, at what level the input should be directed, and to what level the training is to be taken.

Ways of going about need identification differ, but the evidence suggests that direct contact with the groups involved is the only way to obtain accurate information. This does not mean administering questionnaires, but it means working alongside people, involving them in the gathering of information, and involving them in devising the list of needs. It is time-consuming, but short cuts at this stage have repercussions later. And it is not a 'once-and-for-all' process. It is evolutionary. What needs to be developed is a methodology for continuing needs assessment which is built into the projects, so that changing priorities can be used to inform the project throughout it. Both the CEPAC and the Arusha projects illustrate this flexibility well.

(ii) Concretization

The problems which have been identified should not be vague. Realistically, they have to be capable of solution if an attempt is to be made to tackle them. And concretizing the problem probably means examining it in the light of what can be achieved locally. Undoubtedly the ultimate solution might be seen as reshaping the power structure of society as a whole. But, on the ground, this could mean that workers are not being paid adequately for their work, or that housing and sanitation are inadequate, or that the community has no access to the main water or electricity supply.

(iii) Selecting Priorities

The list of priorities for concern, as illustrated by the Arusha example, can be fairly small. The objectives need to be spelt out, and they should be directed towards improving standards locally. They can be objectives such as providing information, or learning skills, or they can be broader, such as improving literacy.

These priorities should be selected by the

community. They arise from needs identification and problem concretization, and they entail a narrowing down from consideration of all the topics which have emerged from the first stages into decisions about first objectives. Group media are ideal tools for carrying out these activities, of identifying needs, concretizing problems and selecting priorities, and drama, video or audio-tape can be used to help focus attention and stimulate discussion so that the priorities emerge.

(iv) Problem-solving Methodology

Once the priorities have been selected by the groups, the next task is to develop a methodology for problem-solving which can be on-going, that is, not a methodology which depends upon the existence of a particular medium, but one which the community evolves and can employ whenever needs arise. Some means of setting up group action is best. In the examples discussed here, community media have been used to 'codify' problems so that the group is stimulated to react to an aspect of a topic, then work out a solution to it. If video is available and is likely to be available for some time, then it is an ideal tool for this work. Similarly, sound tape can be used, or pictures, skits, or other drama forms. Out of this problem-solving should emerge direct plans for action. These may be work teams for projects, but they will often be less practical, and could include a programme of 'finding out', or of exploration of ideas, or of direct education, such as learning to read, or writing to another organization for information or funds.

(v) Access to Information

Informational inputs are likely to be necessary and, here, community media are valuable. The information may be factual, or it may be more experiential. It may be to do with methods of doing things, such as cooking or sewing, gardening or building. But it could also be methods of organization and decision-making, communicating with other power groups, information about the ways in which marketing is accessed, relations with neighbouring communities and with the local and national power structures.

Media can be used to gather information, to explore ideas, to consider alternatives, to communicate with other groups, to illustrate situations, and members of the community should have access to the media so that they participate in this informational stage. Use of media such as audio or video tape can facilitate the gathering of information and, through using it, those involved can 'imbibe' the methodology. After all, it is easier initially to ask questions when operating a technology, as it can act as a kind of 'protection' for the questioner. It is also true that information gathered in this way can be easily conveyed to other members of the group, especially where literacy is not high and where people are unused to making such presentations. However, the involvement in working in this way is educative, and the methodology applies even when the media are not being used. Media can give confidence at a time when a whole range of new skills is being acquired.

The outcome of this process need not be the production of media materials as such, but the development of methods of self-informing which are valid with or without the use of media.

(vi) Action

It is difficult to distinguish between the types of 'action' which a community communications project involves. All the stages described so far include group and individual action. But media can also be used during the action-progress stages of the project, when the groups are carrying out the plans they have conceived. It is important that the group cohesion is maintained for as long as possible, or as long as is necessary to deal with the 'priorities' drawn up. Once this has been done, groups may want to continue and go on to other subjects, or to intensify activity in a particular area. But there are occasions when existing groups might decide to disperse, so that individuals can join in with other projects. Whatever, there is little point in groups continuing to meet unless they have a defined purpose, for there is a danger that they might become self-perpetuating and be in the way of further progress. Community media can be used to monitor the progress of the group, to demonstrate the activities of individuals or sub-groups, to illustrate techniques which have been successful, or to bring for group analysis the difficulties which have been encountered in carrying out the action plan. Media can be used here to analyse whether measures which are being practised are in need of reform, or whether alternative practices need to be adopted. They can bring fresh information to enrich discussion, or to present new ideas and thus supply additional motivation.

(vii) Extending Outwards

At some stage there will be a need to reach outside the confines of the immediate community. This may be in order to communicate with the power groups in the locality and beyond, or to bring the views of these groups to the community. Often the need arises for the group to have more up-to-date information about the outside world, for example, of marketing opportunities, of agricultural projects which might affect the area, of new opportunities, of laws and regulations.

Community media can be the means of bringing these two worlds together. Group media can carry the views of the immediate community to the world beyond, and fulfil the task of bringing what is relevant of that world to the community. It is not intended to suggest that this relationship should be foisted upon the group, but that the need for this

wider relationship should emerge as the goals of the group change.

(viii) Links with Communications System

Ideally, the stage beyond this initial reaching out is the linking of group media projects with an existing communications system. This can be the telephone, or local radio and television where they exist. Or, if the first medium is local radio or television, then regional systems may be used. The groups may want to set up these channels to achieve a particular purpose, but there are probably ways in which existing communication opportunities can be activated. That is, groups may decide to communicate with the authorities directly, through sending telegrams or telephoning. They may wish to make representations through using local or regional press, or through preparing leaflets and/or posters. Where it exists, local radio could become the vehicle for this communication. Again, what is being worked out is a methodology for the use of communication for development purpose, not dependence upon a particular medium.

At the end of the day, the aim of community communications methods is to bring about a situation in which the community has developed to a point where it has the capacity to determine its own fate, as much as that is possible, and to optimize all those opportunities which exist within society to continue to further its development.

5. RESEARCH

The importance of research in the area of community communications cannot be underestimated. This is a new area and, as such, it demands not only research into ways of making its efforts more effective, but new ways of carrying out research. Most communications research, as we have seen, is summative in that it sets out to tell what has happened. Such research is valuable, for it can be used to inform future projects. But what is lacking is research which can inform projects while they are under way, which can reshape and redirect projects which are in existence and which have meaning for the people involved in those projects, not just for academics.

One of the aspects of the Kheda TV project which is most interesting is the way in which the lines between research and production/action are merged. This experience has brought to light some of the shortcomings of traditional research methods In the Kheda situation, methods such as questionnaire administration, sampling techniques, computer analysis and other quantitative research activities are not relevant. The production teams are working at the coal face, and the answers they require are immediate. But, because the areas in which the teams are working are so sensitive, research also has to be accurate. S.R. Joshi, when talking of some of the ways in which research has had to be carried out, refers to the use of 'quick and dirty' techniques. The term is now increasingly understood to be more disparaging than it need be. Showing sample materials to members of the target group for their response is a direct way of measuring reaction, and changes suggested by the viewing group can be made immediately. And from the use of such 'loose' methods have developed some impressively innovative programming modes. At the same time, perhaps through bringing together those who have the experience of traditional research methods and those who have been immersed in the practicalities of the work, the value of these techniques might be increased. It would also be possible to develop some measure of reliability for this action-oriented type of research.

The experience of Arusha and Peru demonstrates that participative research is a good way of developing media materials and an important tool in keeping the project on the right lines. It shows that personal involvement can be more reliable than quantitative methods. At the same time, it is not an activity which is carried on 'outside' the group and outside the project. Similarly, evaluation can be a participative process, and does not need the traditional 'impartiality' of the evaluator to form an accurate picture of what is happening. Participative methods overcome the alienation so frequently found between those involved in the work and the external evaluator. The evidence which emerges from these participative processes is much more likely to have an impact than that presented by an imported evaluator.

Unfortunately, the way in which research has developed is, in a sense, as a 'secret' art form. The researcher visits projects over a period of time and may perhaps ask to sit in on meetings and discussions, which he records or notes. But it is usually a one-way information flow. The researcher asks questions, but resists answering them; asks for information but rarely provides it. Finally, the assessment the researcher makes is written up at a distance and appears months later in a shape which is of little or no value to the project itself.

While sympathizing with the need for impartiality and the need to assimilate fully all the information before jumping to conclusions, it does seem that most research has moved a long way from providing any useful input to what is actually happening. If research and researchers are to be of any use to the development of community communications, then methods have to be developed which are more appropriate. This means that research should concentrate more on helping community media projects achieve their purposes rather than simply providing material for research papers.

It is an anomaly in an area which is so permeated with the value of participation that the

research tool should have as of now made so little impact, and use methods which lie outside the participative mode. The encouraging signs have been noted here, in Kheda, in Tanzania and in Peru. Probably the time is ripe for those who have practised these approaches to come together and refine them for use by future projects.

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